

Alec Baldwin's Great Leap • Ollie North's Revenge

Esquire

THE MAGAZINE FOR MEN

FEBRUARY 1994 • \$2.50

THE 21ST CENTURY FOX

The Rise
of "Do Me"
Feminism
By Tad Friend

The Next
American
Woman
By E. Jean Carroll

An Esquire
Poll: "Does No
Mean No?"
and Other Nosy
Questions

**Drew
Barrymore:**
Role Model?



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Esquire

FEBRUARY 1994 VOLUME 121 NO. 2

Features

THE TWENTY-FIRST-CENTURY WOMAN: A SPECIAL SECTION PAGE 47

You The new women's movement embraces sex in a way not of the past: power of political correctness. Call it "do us" feminism—but only when you say it. <i>Rp. Ted Pimental</i> 48	The Future of American Womanhood Most seventeen-year-old teenage girls, post-breakup, are in a state of a new generation. <i>Rp. J. Jean Carroll</i> 53	Esquire's Poll of the American Woman What's women's career success the sign of their success: political power, or beauty? Our first-ever survey on the state of the gender. 63	Drew Barrymore Is... Teenage puppy, recovering addict, forger. A brief meditation on the iconography of Hollywood's favorite tattooed woman-child. 68
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Alec Baldwin Hangs Tough *Rp. Jesse Solovayoff* 70
PROFILE A high-flying encounter with the actor, in which he sky-dives, surfs, and threatens a little bodily harm.

The Highbrow Smut of Nicholson Baker *Rp. Lyssa Davison* 76
LITERARY LIFE With *The Remains*, the novelist purports to give the uncensored view of male sexuality. Yikes!

Bulletproof *Rp. Martin Shortell* 82
RELIGION If Oliver North was holding the smoking gun in Iran-contra, how come he's running for the Senate?

Kiss and Tell *Rp. Mary Gribble* 90
FICTION He loved her, she left him. Fortunately, sometimes revenge can be only a screenplay away.

Gentleman

Urban Camouflage *Rp. Woody Blockbuster* 96
When city streets start feeling like a war zone, it's time to dress the part. Plus: the tucked-in look.

Natural Selection *Photographs by Diego Lohnd* 98
This spring's American collection of clean, basic, lightweight suits is the crop of the dreams.

How to Make Love to a Woman *Rp. Bruce Bright* 108
An insider's pocket primer on picking up chicks—because, hey, it takes one to know one.

Catwalk Jungle *Photographs by Michael Roberts* 110
Fast-forward fashion: dispatches from backstage at Milan's biannual men's-wear show.

Man At His Best

Madison Avenue (16) Artwalk: sneakers (17) Serving a tax and (18) Stephen Wright's new novel (21) Anthologies of the jazz greats (22) Yves Design's world chair (24) Christine Anagnostou (25) London's star chef (26)

Columns and Departments

The Sound and the Fury 8	Executive Summary <i>Rp. Stanley King</i> 35
Backstage with Esquire 14	The Sporting Life <i>Rp. Mike Leggett</i> 37
Our Man in the White House <i>Rp. Walter Shapiro</i> 32	American Scene <i>Rp. Robert Leggett</i> 39

COVER: DANTE D'ONAZIO

FEBRUARY 1994 ESQUIRE 5

The Sound and the Fury

Rare Airmail

THANK YOU for the look at Michael Jordan's private life and thoughts ("The Private Michael Jordan," by Michael Jordan, photographer by Walter Iooss Jr., November 1994) that why doesn't Jordan want to stick around the game when he retires? Certainly other players could benefit from his insights.

—CHARLES FUET
Hershey, Pa.

ENQUIRE TOLD how Michael Jordan feels about certain important issues in his life. However, his feelings about being an African-American sports hero in a usually biased country were conveniently ignored.

—ELLIOTT NEAL HESTER
Miami Beach, Fla.

Hope and Glory

CLIFFORD JAYNES' article "The Death of Hope" (November) is the only honest report I have seen regarding the suicide of Deputy White House Counsel Vernon Riffe Jr. Not everything can be neatly explained, especially the decision to take one's own life. I salute Jaynes' willingness to say: We don't know why I wish we had more like him in the print media.

—DANIEL P. JONES
Columbia Ohio

CLIFFORD JAYNES understood the intensity of Vernon Foster's suffering and compassion toward it with rare self-restraint. To many who have lost a loved one to profound depression, Jaynes' words are deeply comforting, to others contemplating suicide, possibly lifesaving. The tragedy is that depression is so treatable, but stigma prevents four out of five people from seeking treatment for fear of professional and social ruin. Jaynes' understated case for ending the stigma attached to depression cannot not a moment too soon.

—NOLA WEINSTEIN
National Sigma Chi Chapter
Albany, N.Y.



Pilgrims' Progress

I WAS ELIZABETH COLBERT's high school English teacher and would like to congratulate Enquire on the publication of her insightful story "Pilgrims" (November). Her landscapes—physical, emotional, and verbal—have the aspect of absolute truth. I shall be looking for more of her work.

—RUDOLPH SIKAKI
Lakeland, Conn.

Hope Notes

I ENJOYED John Bennett's "Numb on Hope" in the November issue, especially his attribution of the invasion of hope to P.T. Barnum. However, it is debatable that Barnum over-observed. "There's a sucker born every minute." This old remark is constantly attributed to Barnum probably because it demonstrates the dimensions of the myth than the reality of the showman.

—LARRY D. GRIFFIN
Midland, Tex.

WHEN JOHN BENEDET offers P.T. Barnum, Swifty Lazar, and a flaccid *Lonesome* movie as leading examples of the public relations profession, it's like

describing the *Natural Exposure* and *A Certain Affair* as standard bearers of American journalism. Is part of PR's role to hype? Sure. But public relations has more to do with strategic planning and conservative audience dialogue than it does with "unsubstantiated hackdom."

—ANTHONY D'ANGELO
Goshen, N.Y.

Zip It Up

IN STANLEY KING's "The Thing" (November), I read the following: "Have you heard about the Denver thing?" says Nofziger in Corporate Finance while he's shuffling off in the executive washroom. "Come guys, the thing for me is to maintain at least a pretense of propriety. I don't know—maybe I came to last—what shuffling is did for Nofziger. But it left my consciousness to your magazine quite deep."

—SUSAN M. CARONI
Albany, Ga.

Veep Oversight

WALTER SHAPIRO's article on baby boomer access to power Al Gore ("Has Anyone Seen This Man?" September) was laughable, but for one detail. He states that Al Gore's earliest opportunity

to run again for the highest office will be the year 2000. Not so. If the President fails to complete his term, and/or does not stand for reelection, then Mr. Gore may have his chance in 1997. It would not be the first time that a vice president who began a political career at an early age and whose public-speaking skills were criticized had such an opportunity—Lyndon Johnson and Hubert Humphrey both come to mind.

—RICHARD DOUGLAS
New York, N.Y.

THE ALAN R. ROSEN PORTrait of Al Gore looks a lot like his face!

—J. K. TERRY
Birmingham, Ala.

Letters to the editor should be mailed with your address and daytime phone number to: *The Sound and the Fury*, Enquire, 170 West Fifty-fifth Street, New York, NY 10019. Letters may be edited for length and clarity.



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Style. Gotta Have It.

So where do you get it? There aren't a hell of a lot of fashion magazines for men. Some of the better ones are in languages other than English. The others are so full of "lifestyle" and celebrity puff pieces that the fashion coverage seems like something of an afterthought. Then there is

Esquire Gentleman, a special fashion issue from the editors of Esquire.

Esquire Gentleman is deep fashion, and nothing but, cover to cover. Old World dandies, cutting-edge club kids, legendary influencers, regular guys. It's all here.

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is not just about fashion models and designers. In every issue we feature photos and articles about interesting local scenes, current and classic trends, and the real-world people on the street who make it happen.

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FEMINISM HAS ALWAYS SOUGHT equality in two critical arenas: the boardroom and the bedroom. And while women have no doubt gained tremendous ground professionally, they are often more troubled by (and divided over) making advances romantically. Indeed, *sexual* politics is considerably more lethal than corporate politics. † And throughout feminism's many battles, Esquire has been there—sometimes like an uninvited guest who just doesn't know when to leave—to chronicle, interpret, and publish its emerging voices: from Gloria Steinem to Nora Ephron to Naomi Wolf. Beginning on



E. Jean Carroll

page 42 we present a twenty-two-page section devoted to the singular of today's women's movement.

In "Sex" (page 48), contributing editor **Tad Friend** introduces a new breed of feminist—the "do me" feminist, who knows what she likes in bed and isn't afraid to ask for it. "In previous decades," Friend says, "there have been solo voices calling for the louder, more graphic expression of sexuality. But now there is a chorus"—women such as *Sleaze* Bright and Mary Gaskill (both of whose work appears elsewhere in this issue), Kate Murphy, and Lisa Pikel. The big question do me feminists raise with their put-out-and-shut-up sexuality: Friend says is "What should a man's response be?"

The hopes of do-me feminism may rest on girls very much like seventeen-year-old *Sumner* Jacobson of Madison, Wisconsin ("The Future of American Womanhood," page 58). As *Esquire's* Esquire contributor **E. Jean Carroll** reports, "Sumner is the finest young woman I have ever met. She is shocked by nothing." Carroll, whose biography of *Honor 5* Thompson, Hitler was recently published in paperback by Plume Books, also says that "twenty-first-century womanhood is in good hands. For boys better watch out."

"ALEC BALDWIN IS A STUDY in the vicissitudes of the parish complex," says contributing editor **Dan Snierson**, who probes the media wary actor ("Alec Baldwin Hangs Tough," page 72). "He reminds me of a type Melville used to write about—the Handsome Sinner. Good looking, hyper-masculine and destined for a career as 'Belvedere's' first book. *No Success Like Failure* will be published next month.

Mary Gaskill makes her *Esquire* debut this month with her short story "Kiss and Tell" (page 30) in which a screenwriter coasts revenge on an ex-lover. The author of *Bad Behavior* and *Two Girls, Friend Them*, Gaskill says that she herself once "had a pretty horrible experience with Hollywood. The best thing I got out of it was health insurance."

In his new novel, *The Private*, Nicholson Baker goes

inside the mind of a sexually adventurous middle-aged man who can't leave alone. What contributing editor **Igor Doring** discovers there will not give comfort to those who believe male consciousness has evolved ("The Highbrow Secret of Nicholson Baker," page 76). "When I asked women what they would do if they could stop time," Doring says, "they told me, 'Catch up on my reading and 'Organize my files.' Men, however, seemed to understand women. If there was ever a delineation between the sexes, this is it."

Robert Lippert (first met *Esquire's* chief Chris Lyons a decade ago and has been fascinated by the man and his people ever since) (He set two of his young adult novels—*The Bone* and *The Chief*—as a reservation modeled after *Omoo*—page 34). As Lippert says of Lyons, "This elder of the tribe is really the elder of all our tribes." (B.I.F., "Brats," page 36). A longtime sports columnist for *The New York Times*, Lippert has recently begun a new column for us: *Sunday Edition*.

Whether you love her or loathe her, *Olivia* North is alive and well and running for the U.S. Senate in Virginia ("Bulletproof," page 82). True to his military background, North is very guarded about his reputation. "Every time I heard him talk about his three p's while campaigning—pigs, paddy, and participation," says **Martin Shortell**, a staff writer at *The Washington Post* since 1984. "I always thought he should add a fourth—panacea."

Finally, who better to give men intimate sexual advice on women than a woman? **Sleaze Bright** brings all in "How to Make Love to a Woman" (page 106). The author of *Sex Sages* (*London Sex World*) (*Cleo*), as well as the editor of the first *American Erotica* and *Horror* series, Bright says that while she has no trouble picking up women, "I can barely lift my three-and-a-half-year-old daughter" as



Lynn Darling



Martin Shortell

GIORGIO ARMANI
LE COLLEZIONI

MAN AT HIS BEST

EDITED BY ANITA LECLERC

Turning Tramp

Once she left the small town of Twin Peaks, Mädchen Amick was headed for trouble

YOU KNOW HER as Shelly, the absurd but acutely imperious girl behind the coffee counter at Twin Peaks. That will change shortly in Mädchen Amick's roles in the various new film Debra Lee Amick's characters, Lena, poor white trash from Texas, who was born as a glossy yuppie princess in order to meet a rapist golden prince (James Spader, who else?), and then, for reasons not entirely clear, the systematically drives him insane.

I usually related more to Lena than to Shelly. Amick says in that little-girl voice, "It's kind of scary." Indeed, both Lena's and Mädchen's roles do have a *Final Girl* or *Tiffany's* ring. Early on, Amick decided to leave her hometown of Reno for a glamorous performing life. She dropped high school as if it were an audition for a too-small part. By senior the was modeling in L.A. Two years later she returned to small-town life as a TV star. Twin Peaks' success graciously holding whatever indignities David Lynch could do dream up for her—a psycho husband earned drooling vegetable and such "I just loved the little things he came up with," she says.

Although Amick allows that her new life as an in demand Hollywood actress "seems like a new dreamy dream," what separates Mädchen from Lena is



Seduction: She's had to wait until James Spader wakes up and starts the plot.

her absolute refusal to plumb the darker side of self-transformation. Mädchen is mean in *Gorilla*, but it might as well be *Polynesian* in English. As a teenager, she says, she was untouched by the fast Hollywood life. Now at twenty three she's constantly teamed with two small children. Debra acting, that most neurotic and subliminal of cranks, serves as an out-

let, she says, "to make me even more normal in my normal life." Could Amick—her foul, ultrafeminine face set off by hair swept up in a thick mass or pulled back to give her an even hungrier look—could this woman be so wholesome? "Yeah," she says, and then, with a laugh and a nod in Lena's direction, "or she's in a really good stream." —JOANNE MOORE

DAVE FACTOR

1984 Plus Ten

THE RAIDERS LED the Redskins when the ad came on—the now-celebrated "1984" TV spot that introduced the Apple Macintosh computer. It has been ten years now since Steve Jobs and gang created the "computer for the rest of us." In *Insanely Great*, just out from Viking, Steven Levy, author of the classic *Hackers*, deftly recounts not only how the Mac came to be but how it came to be a national icon.

The Mac was the creation of a kind of cult—and the Mac, in turn, created a cult. Jobs offered the Mac as a bold alternative to the Burenburg-rilly conformism of the IBM users in the ad. From the perspective of this Super Bowl Sunday, the whims of the intervening decade include not just IBM's decline or its rapprochement with Apple but the fact that it was the Macintosh, not the IBM PC, that inspired mass fervor; the sort of loyalty commanded by a Harley or a Corvette. The Mac may not, as Jobs boasted, have kept 1984 from being like 1984, but it did a lot to keep 1984 from being like 1984. —



The Next Big Shoe



NOW THAT AIR JORDAN has stepped off the court and Dr. Martens AirWair has cleared the skateboards, where they're usually seen, and stride off along Main Street—and into the mainstream. Lean and light, modest and inexpensive, with a functionalism born on real pavement, Airwalks are right for the times. The various models are distinguished by names worthy of thrash bands—Vood, Delesta, Thesart, Hoffs, Gumbo, Northern—and radiate a jaunty 1970s feel, evoking classic early Pumas. They ride dead ahead, on roles as fast as slacker affect. —

Air apparent: Airwalk's Gamble shoe from the company's One series is ready to jump the curb (\$50).

The Tax Audit

Still America's greatest sadomasochistic ritual,
Taxpayer's Bill of Rights or no

YOUR W-2 AND 1099 FORMS should be arriving in the mailbox day now, and when they do it's likely they'll push you into a tax-time funk. One way of dealing with the syndrome is to think of others less fortunate than you: the Winston-Salem businessman, for example, who was so strapped for cash after the IRS illegally seized his assets that he committed suicide so his family could live on his death benefits, or the computer scientist who wrote a tax letter on her sex life. "Signed involuntarily under penalty of perjury parabens!" and was fined \$200 for submitting a "Trevor" return or the once Edward Wilson whose final years were persecuted by a despotic IRS, which garnished his earnings, reviewed every penny he spent (reimbursement him on one occasion for buying his dog a sociological textbook), and, when he complained that he barely had enough to live on, coldly informed him "We're not concerned with hardship."

The IRS has been a nagging, badly run since its federal inception in 1913. Emboldened by the notion that paying taxes is a form of persecution and these fears spread, the IRS has fired its missiles in a way that would never have been contemplated in any other enforcement agency. Until recently, Congress has been reluctant to clamp down on the IRS for fear of impeding the flow of revenue and, worse, inciting the agency's wrath. In 1991, when Senator James

Cromm of Michigan dared to speak up against the agency's operations, the internal revenue commissioner personally handed him a bill for \$10 million in back taxes. The former head of Treasury Secretary Andrew Mellon could be deemed as that historic act of retaliation (Mellon was the principal owner of Gulf Oil, which had benefited enormously from savings specifically created by Cromm). A few years later Franklin Roosevelt's administration turned the tables and brought criminal charges against Mellon for tax fraud. Mellon beat the rap.

Subsequent administrations also used tax audits as a political tool to harass their enemies. President Kennedy set up a unit within the IRS called the Ideological Or-

ganizations Audit Project, its mission was to go after right-wing extremists. Later, Johnson and Nixon expended the power, adding drug-dealers, antiwar protesters, and civil rights activists to the target list. It all came to an abrupt halt when the Watergate tapes revealed that Nixon wanted the IRS to investigate everyone who had contributed to George McGovern's 1972 presidential campaign. Nixon's abuse of the IRS was cited in one of the articles of impeachment brought against him, and then in 1976 Congress passed a law upholding access to tax records.

Today, the IRS audits about a million returns a year, roughly 1 percent of all those filed. Few auditors are the hellbitch line by line variety; most are focused on specific items flagged by an automated scoring system. No one knows exactly what the secret criteria for audits are—aside from obvious heavy-handed cheating—but no past any there are tactical ways of beating the system. Leave a few dollars unpaid, says Frederick Duly in *Stand Up to the IRS* (that way your return will be sent to the collection division, and while it's there, a contest be considered for audit). David Rimmmon of *Time Is Young* says not to mail your return until just before April 15, on the theory that chaotic delays in the mail and thus the late early birds are more likely to be picked off for audit. There is a difference of opinion about the suggested address label. This is, says Laura Saunders of *Richter* because the IRS can make grave mistakes when it has to retype your data; don't use it, says Duly because it puts your return into the processing cycle faster. An extreme tactic would be to move to a city where the audit rate is low. The na-

tional average in 1991 was 4 audits per 1,000 returns but a recent study in the Philadelphia area, the rate was 3.3; Las Vegas, 2.9; Manhattan, 2.9; Atlanta, 2.7; Honolulu, 2.6; Pittsburgh, 2.6; Los Angeles, 2.5.

If, indeed, you are audited, the ordeal is not supposed to be as harrowing as it once was, thanks to the Taxpayer's Bill of Rights passed by Congress in 1988.

The law is designed to take some of the fear out of dealing with the IRS and to discourage its Turbo mentality, supplied by a sign that once hung in a Los Angeles IRS supervisor's office: *ARE YOU EVER CATCH UP?* The bill allows you to tape-record your audit, to bring a lawyer or accountant with you, and to sue for wrongful action. It also



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prohibits the IRS from requiring its agents to meet dollar quotas in their visits. "The IRS claims the bill has improved its relations with its 'customers.' Perhaps it has. One such customer was my friend Andrea, and her story is worth telling.

Andrea is an art director who lives in a studio apartment. She often works at home, so she deducts a third of her apartment expenses. Last year, she received a notice from the IRS to explain these deductions, and when she arrived for her audit she was pleasantly surprised. Her examiner was a handsome young man who broke up to a more than friendly grin when he saw her. He side-glanced at her while he worked, the muscles in his face twitched approvingly, and he approved every deduction. "Well," Andrea says when it was over, "I didn't mind that at all. In fact, it was a pleasure."

"It would be an even greater pleasure," the examiner replied, "in other surroundings. Can I take you to dinner sometime?"

"Sure" said Andrea, feeling a flush come to her cheeks. "Or... if you like, I happen to be a pretty good cook myself."

"Great," he said.

Andrea started to put on her coat. "I should tell you," she said, "my apartment is comfortable, but it's very modest. It's just one room."

"One room?" the examiner replied. "You can't take all these deductions if you live in one room!" He flipped her file open again and with a smile, flicked over the deduction and stamped up a bill for \$100 in back taxes, penalties and interest. Once that was done, Andrea smiled, he looked up and said with a perfectly straight face, "Nice Thursday! Your place at 8:30?"



Getting Down on the Farm Picture the dedicated gourmet as the finest cart is wheeled out, each confection more enticing than the last, and you'll have some idea of the look on our young hero's face as each of those four lovelies escape off the trails and into Fernando Trueba's *Pelle Gypso*. Winner of nine Goyas (Spanish Academy Awards), the film tells of an idealistic deserter from the Spanish Army who spends the night at a farmhouse, then stays on when the farmer's daughters come home for the summer. What follows is profitably lusty and tangled, a tale of a golden, sun-soaked time before France's invasion. More than just a ruddy Spanish take on *Anna and the King*, *Pelle Gypso* is an exuberant celebration of unexploited sex—something like the ultimate *Lawrence*—the daughter jokes locked out to slinky heavily indented, or

Serial Thriller

REMEMBER THAT GOOD old digger Johnny Appleseed? There's a different sort of folk hero roaming the deserted American landscape these days, and it's not once he's plowing. We're talking about our new national nightmare and cultural fixation, the serial killer. Stephen Wright's deeply weird and powerful novel *Long Night* (Burr, Scribner de Gruyke) offers an unsettling look at why such killers have achieved mythic resonance in this crime-movie-obsessed culture. While Jones the killer in question vanishes one night from a backyard barbecue to fully reemerge only in the novel's last pages, with a new name, a new wife, and a seriously bad attitude, the real self-

there ever was such a thing—as exposed like an unplugged television. He has become a *Violent* with a Glock.

The novel's shifting focus is a daring, and at times disorienting, proposition. Wright starts *America's Most Wanted* on its head with Wiley nearly offstage, the tremendously more charismatic of the two—the disabler's victim, says Wright, might ones. "I was burning the novel down chapter by chapter," Wright, a Vietnam vet, says of the book's unconventional structure. "The book runs right, turns right again, then takes another right."

My thought as I wrote it was, "You just fucked" it. Not, as it turns out, neither in regard to Wright nor this delectable, eerie narrative about the all-American fantasy of evil. But as for Wiley Jones and his victims, now they are fucked.

—WILL SWYTHE



Stephen Wright: He rubs whodunnits through a 1980s-level American

Music: Mark Jacobson

Nostalgia for the Bop

JAZZ NOSTALGIA, the poppsych variety at best, will always be a tightly wadded deposit in the memory bank, a blip on the culture size. Unlike rock nostalgia, it hasn't been so packaged around juxtaposed with Coors bathing suits as to make us know our collective (blatant, the Beatles, Dixie) jazz. Perhaps it is the private neo-legend—and the fact that at most every hop here of our youth is dead—that make projects like Rhino's series of Atlantic jazz anthologies so affectionately misreading. With fifty-page booklets of jargon, music and suitably evocative photos (the last entry, all part of those, in shades, playing with a Navy band in Hawaii), these digests remained and (reluctantly) reasonably proud collections are, for the old record hound looking to up date, a near-to-unfilled year.

Currently it's discussing not to least "Goodbye Dark: The Hat" followed by "Rogue Day Shuffle," as it has been for decades on the Rhinos.

Rhino's Atlantic Jazz Anthologies

John Coltrane: The Last Giant

Charles Mingus: Thirteen Pictures

Babylon Richard Kirk: Does Your Name Have Legs

Orrin Coleman: Beauty Is a Rare Thing



Charles Mingus

vinyl. All this, but that doesn't detract from the lushness and melodic of this Lester Young respect. And what curious blues it is to once again behold Kirk's smoky, pastoral, "I Say a Little Prayer," even if a no longer comes out of a racy album cover recorded with the phony number of an old girlfriend. Not that one should assume that these "anthologies" are anything close to complete. Former cover art, photos often jumped in.

Soil. You'll have to look elsewhere for much of Coltrane and Kirk. Coltrane is one of the few members of the generation who did the bulk of his important playing on Atlantic. No surprise, then, as we always would know, Atlantic, for all its R&B glory, was primarily a crossover jazz label, bending toward to jazz but not a major force like Prestige or Blue Note.

But the uniqueness of the Rhino collection only adds to its nostalgic appeal, making it as it does the unusual hopper experience: the five



John Coltrane



Babylon Richard Kirk



Orrin Coleman

edition of taste. Yet were you like, Lester lights were soon valuable when seen in relief to the covered game. And current investigation of these sides suggests unexpected, even blasphemous, revelations. You know, I cried when Time died, but now the magnificence of "Guns Sings" sounds a tad soiled, even as I really say: that—fascia. His cocaine, delicious harmonized, ornate jazz? Coltrane's magnificent focus is over time, but the man just doesn't seem to be having any fun. Conversely the lower linked, bravura

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JUST ADD BACARDI



TASTE THE FEELING.



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Design: Phil Patton

Be Seated, Please. *Setzen Sie Sich, Bitte.* *Asseyez-vous, S'il* *Vous Plaît....*

The world's new design leader speaks five languages

THE FARMERS who work the vineyards on the hills above the luxury and offices of Vitra Design Museum in Weil am Rhein, Germany, shake their heads at the buildings they keep springing up there. They call it *der Schloß*—the castle, but it is more a feudal town made of modern materials—from

Frank Gehry's Vitra Design Museum, a chocolate temple to the chair, to Zaha Hadid's dizzying glass fire mansion to Tadao Ando's stately conference pavilion, like a modern Zen monastery.

Vitra's eclectic and international architecture portfolio is as a new kind of furniture making a new kind of furniture. Automobile companies talk of "the world car"—Detroit ships Nissans to Niedersachsen while Mercedes will build "sports cars" in Barcelona. Vitra, with headquarters near the point where Germany, Switzerland, and France meet, is showing the way to "the world chair." Clearly the company has emerged as the natural successor to Olivetti, ERM, and Bertoia as a world leader in design, the counterpart of a business strategy that Rolf Pöhmann, its CEO and guiding visionary, sometimes belters only calls "a cultural offensive."

Rather than pick a prime de sugar or two, Pöhmann put together a sort of international all-star team: the Czech Republic's Bertel Steple, England's Jørgen Mortensen, France's Philippe Starck, Italy's Mario Bellini and Antonio Citterio, and others. But Vitra designers don't lose their national identities; they put their own spin on the world. Mortensen's simple wooden chair, with only six parts, nonetheless records its surrounding: the whole British furniture tradition in the delicate curve of its back. Steple's leans in their post-

Philippe Starck's iconic 20 chair: A sleek French fusion of aluminum, not gold.



Bertel Steple's Sedlak chair: High-tech, high-tech restoration of a farmer's chair.



Jørgen Mortensen's wooden chair: The whole British tradition summed up in his back.



Starck's iconic 20 chair: A sleek French fusion of aluminum, not gold.

Zeno. The Fragrance of Desire.





Dillard's Dayton's Hudson's
Marshall Field's Macy's

ly gaudies Gallo grandio-
sity. Although *Shoreline*, it
can be studied a dozen high
in a backward-curving pole
suggesting time-lapse pho-
tography. *Shoreline*'s Sedak, or
former, cheer offers a strange,
Bohemian profile, in shapes
evoking hoof and horn in a
style Toklivan calls magic
rubbish. Frank Gehry's card-
board Lark Beaver chair
a California fable with an
export license.

The company also offers
a high-end line called Vitis
Edison that includes such
modern collectibles as Starck's
strange W/W stool, created
for the dancer Vito Win-
diers which seems to coast to-
ward the floor on tensioned
ferris, a surrealist table.

But underneath the high
style, the Vitis are high-
tech, too, and hold guys
buried a Vitis executive chair
you encounter a combination
of Tuscany steel-leaf springs,
Swiss watchworks, and an
almost Japanese serenity of
mechanism. But Vitis adds
to the technology Starck's
Lemon is built from "blue
oil" polypropylene, created
through a process that wraps
the plastic around a giant ice
bubble, making it light and
flexible. The chair's stems
were freeze separated early
from the plastic for recycling.
For all Vitis chairs are assem-
bled with three basic tools—
hammer, pliers, and screw-
driver, a trio celebrated at
We'll by a giant Claes Olden-
burg sculpture of the tools
thrusting in heroic ballet. And
today those tools dance in
the hands of workers in Al-
lentown, Pennsylvania, in a
glowering new factory. Billy
Joel would barely recognize it.

You can see Vitis furniture through
a representative near you by call-
ing 800-337-0179 and see to
what for the "office world" of the
future in a show called Citrus
Office, coming this summer to the
Art Institute of Chicago.

Media

She Goes to War for CNN

Christiane Amanpour is a
woman of many conflicts

WE MET IN PARIS, the
most cultured of cities,
where no hotel, at 200
lemons (1994) a night,
with the toilet in the
hallway, delivers a *petit déjeuner* on
porcelain. But Christiane Amanpour,

thirty-six, the daughter of an
Iranian businessman and an
English mother, friends all the
Shah, who grew up in what
she describes as the office mil-
lennium of pre-revolutionary Tehran,
is anxious to re-
turn to the Bos-
nian slaughter. "I
believe in this sla-
very," she says, in-
cluding the conflict
a war of soldiers
against civilians,
the prosecution of the soldiers.

Amanpour smokes a great
deal in Bosnia but hardly at all
when she's out. She's defensive
about this habit. Considering where
she's going, nicot-
ine would seem to
be the least of her
health risks. Her
work is becoming
more dangerous.

because her reports from the former Yu-
goslavia for CNN are viewed by all sides.
She's fluent in Farsi, which helps with
Muslims. They tell her a fierce Serb and
Croat think she's a liar. "They say," she
says, describing Serbs on the front line.
"It hits me here," she says, pointing to
the skin between her collarbones.

AMANPOUR'S ASCENT over the
past ten years, from an assistant
on the CNN international desk to
one of its top correspondents, is outstand-
ing. Asked if she has always been ambi-
tious, the winner of the 1993 Livingston
Award for journalists as well as the 1993
Ernst Award nominations for her work
smiles and says, "Yeah... but in a nice
way." Since 1990 she's covered the Bos-
nian Gulf, China, Tibet, and now the in-
sults in the house that Tito built. With

a voice like cream
projecting perfect
King's English, she
has provided the
most consistent
network coverage
of a war that 42
percent of Ameri-
cans polled call "like Vietnam."
Her celebrity gave considerably
within the petri dish of
journalism when she was re-
cently quoted by
the *Los Angeles*
Times criticizing
CBS's international
coverage of the
area. Don Piller
barked Amanpour
reports, but two
weeks later we found Don in
Sarajevo. —S. G. WHITE

From Baghdad to Bosnia:
Another year, another war for
CNN's newest star reporter.



You Are Where You Jack In

Today, nothing says as much about you as your on-line address

THE INTERNET, the big digital superhighway system, may be the new global town square, but it's a complex world. You can't just dial it direct. To get access to the cables—the Libraries of Congress catalog the CIA's best book that B & B chat line in Singapore—you need an on-ramp, an access point, a local exchange. Called hosts, or gateways, these link-up services make up something like the neighborhoods of the info-topology. But they are also the makers of cyberspace, each providing a variety of computer bulletin-board services tailored to the interests of its members.

So formidable is this world that some owners hire Internet guides like Brian Johnson (800-757-6473) to blaze their trail. Johnson, a terrible Kil Gerson of cyberspace, helped us hunt down the electronic hosts of the prestigious colleges—the BClairfield 8's or Plaza 9's—on the Net. Today, nothing says as much about you as your on-line address. Where you physically live is relevant only when it comes to figuring the phone bill. What matters is where you hang your 66.

(Phone numbers for most dial-up except where indicated, log-on codes are specified. Typical charges range from \$15 to \$30 a month in addition to your phone bill.)

● **WELL.** Whole Earth 'Lectures Link. The original, from the Whole Earth Catalog group. The sides are non-meaty health-food kitchens. Local access point, significantly, is in Beaverton. 415-335-0136, log in as **welluser**

● **ECSE.** East Coast Ecogroup. Run out of a Greenwich Village luncheonette by a woman named Stacy Horn, who

wants it to be "like Gertrude Stein's apartment in Paris in the '20s." 212-989-8318, **ecseuser**

● **PARIS.** Public Access Paris. "Paris" not—ohmy, right, no brins, but from New York area. 212-787-3100, **parisuser**

● **The Pipeline.** New York exchange founded by Olson author James Gleick, who says it will be "for normal

people, for the first time"—info sometimes locked down on by hardware. This surface. With an eye to use Windows interface the Upper West Side of hosts, near park view 212-357-8600, **connet**

● **MacNet.** For aficionados and others William Gibson readers, the East Village of gateway 212-908-4142, **macnet**

● **The Cyberspace Station.** Wouldn't you like your on-line address to read "in verna, con"? San Diego's only government is one of the most so here in the country, even the headlines say so. It's a life to access the Net through terminals in the public library 619-634-1367, **connet**

● **Edison North.** Seattle Northern exposure to the Net. 206-347-3337, **www**

● **Did 'n' Get.** Los Angeles area Cyber-murder! USA. Floods only please 800-723-7353, **newuser**

● **Delphi.** Expert Marklack's bid to bring the Net to the masses. 609-645-6030, **marklack@delphi.com**

● **Invitation for Global Communication.** Debates. Please Not. EcoNet, LaborNet, RemotNet. World problems solved here 415-333-0354, **www**

● **Parad.** Hardware Edition. Valley where you can get the latest Apple group 408-225-0841, **parad**

● **The NetNetwork.** News-age rules, crystals 'n' stuff, channeling by wire. Washington, D.C., area. Tel. 703-643-4830

—PAT PATTON



Don't Kill the Messenger

IT SHOULD BE a comfort to messengers, operating under the watchful eye of law, that science-fiction novelists think they're going to be around a long time. In the two hottest books of the genre that still bloom under the name cyberspace, the stars are delivery people. The heroine of William Gibson's *Countdown* takes the form of Neal Stephenson's *Snow Crash*, a tale to read

What's interesting about the new me-d-it-ism technology—we're used to the idea that we'll all be pecking onto cyberspace and shared virtual reality—shows the economics and politics of the future. It's so much pain as it is cyber. In *Snow Crash*, transactions have replaced government. Plans delivery is handled by the Matrix. If it doesn't get there in half a hour, they shoot the deliveryman. People live in networks. "Bachelorette"—a name which only messengers move easily.

Messengers are stars in cyber fiction because they're the last people left who handle real stuff, not the virtual variety Gibson, who now boasts that he wrote his first book as a self-help manual, describes them as operating "at the critical intersection of information and geography." In a digital world, physical delivery offers "a degree of absolute security in the final recovery of data." Be forget the high-tech glitzer clocks. Load up your long-term portfolio with UPS, FedEx, and Domino's. ■

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God Save the Cuisine!

**Found for pound,
Marco Pierre White
is the best chef in
London**

AT THE FRONT of Marco Pierre White's menu is a Solander. This prodigious

SOFT AT SIX I WANTER TO BE A CHIEF, AN EXEC, A MANAGER, AND MY AMBITIONS HAVE BEEN GROWING EVER SINCE. Hence

Nations for throwing customers out the door if they so much as complain about his brood riffs. White is as broad shouldered and menacing as a rugby player, with a grating demeanor that makes you think of Gerard Depardieu. Nevertheless, the man is an inspired cook considered by many to be the finest chef in London right now.

Having achieved two Michelin stars at a small restaurant in Windsorloch called Harry's (now in other hands), White has moved to the grandest floor of the prime old Hyde Park Hotel in Kensington, and from the day it opened the restaurant—which is called The Restaurant—has been the toughest ticket in town, booked far weeks in advance. And since White's partner in the venture is actress Michael Caine, it has drawn a pretty steady stream of recreational society.

Since coming to this edacious room full of brocade sofas and heavy moldings, White has tried hard to curb his temper. But he will shoo



Brit trac: He isn't called the bad boy of British cuisine for nothing.

over at his chair when customers tell him they want to eat light. He will refuse to wear a wig and constantly runs his fingers through his shock of hair, and he will brutally enough assault the cleanliness of chefs in France (where he's never set foot) who "make you sick with all those stupid neo-classic touting menus." But you'll forgive him all this—even the \$200-per-person tab for a three-course meal—when you taste his glorious cuisine.

In one sense White's food is rather

complexity of flavor that is soothing. He'll do a marvelous combination of oysters with a cream sauce, Chardonnay cream, a delicate soup of red snapper and artichoke, and a perfect note. Then, with enormous apples and cream, truffle. He pretends to bring to any other cooking method, allowing the snapper of the oyster to bring, focus into harmony, as in a double of Scottish beef in a richly reduced burgundy sauce with parmesan puree and wild mushroom garnish.

White's menu list is one of the finest in England, and the service staff is first-class. Despite the current strong dollar, nothing here is cheap, but even if you have to eat burgers and mash for the rest of your trip to London, don't miss a chance to

dine at The Restaurant. The Restaurant is at 44 Regent Street, London, at 71 272-5130 or 272-5130.

Slick Vic

THE PROBLEM with most of London's renovated old hotels is that they're not very new. So the \$148 million restoration of the Langham, considered a marvel of nineteenth-century architecture when it opened in 1865, is proof even if you want to look in the high-Victorian style of exquisite mansuety, the place setting of the Palm Court, and enough marble and gold leaf to sink the Titanic, without losing attention like air-conditioning, a lovely club, electronic bar-louie, swimming room, and an exceptionally helpful staff. And just try making a drink in the basement of eighteenth-century offered at the central bar's bar. The Langham Hotel is in the West End, at 1 Portland Place tel. 71 428 1800.



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MAXIMILLIAN
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THE BON MARCHE
SEATTLE

MCDONNELL'S
HONOLULU

BYD JEROME
CHICAGO

You thought
girls were yucky
once too.



Dewar's



Bully Bill

Or, just what can a president do to stop a twelve-year-old with an Uzi?

SOMETHING LIBERATING has happened to Bill Clinton. Lately he has discovered that a president is more than a smile-and-a-shoeshine policy salesman, more than a lawgiver, more than even the commander in chief of the dominant military power of the age. There is a moral dimension to the presidency as well, a power to transform minds and change attitudes in a way that can be more lasting than simply winning votes. And as George Stephanopoulos put it, "He is finally getting an idea of the power of his own voice." ¶ We were chatting in Stephanopoulos's White House office early in December while the President's AIDS address was being piped in over the squawk-

box on George's desk. I asked Stephanopoulos, had Clinton wanted so long in President to take on the Procter & Gamble persona that had been one of the hallmarks of his campaign for the White House? As George opened his mouth to answer, he was beaten to the punch by the overly disembodied voice of his boss, who said, "One of the things that I underestimated when I became President was the actual power of the words coming from the bully pulpit of the White House to move the country."

It was a telling confession, a reminder that the Clinton presidency is still in the process of becoming. "We're finally at a time when we can move away from the legislative agenda and talk more basically about values," explains senior adviser David Gergen. "In 1993 the President was defined by issues that he understood—NAFTA and the deficit. In 1994 he will be defined by the issues that he's putting before the country. This year we'll find out what a Clinton presidency is all about."

Gergen, for all his power in the White House, doesn't fully know where this presidency is headed. Why should he, when, in a sense, neither does Clinton himself? No one has

yet discussed the marginal-impunity issue aspects of this administration—thus Clinton's increasingly passionate sermons on violence, particularly black-on-black warfare. "The President reads the cross news in the March edition of *The Washington Post*," points out communications director Mark Gorman. When a scrounger sprayed a Washington public swimming pool with a semiautomatic gun last June, Clinton's immediate impulse was to visit the site because it was his town's budget time, and he provided upon Clinton to stay in the White House, last his message appear elsewhere.

But that was before Bill Clinton discovered his moral voice—before the campaign against urban violence became the central issue for the President's embrace of the bully pulpit.

THE ROOTS OF THIS ISSUE trace to the playing fields of Martha's Vineyard. A president lives on sound-bite and sound-bite capital—the ideas and theories that he acquired back in the days when he actually had time to think. During his August vacation, Clinton for the first time in years gave himself time to read, reflect, and reflect. The morning he returned to the White House, the President surprised a beleaguered speech staff by a proper breakfast. Embedded in that talk was Clinton's awakened initial effort to speak out on violence, as he lamented what was happening in a country where we are losing millions of our young people and where they shoot each other with abandon, and now often shoot out strangers just for kicks—shoot at them when they are swimming in the swimming pool in the summer.

In mid-October Clinton tried to return to the theme of youth violence in speeches at the University of North Carolina and at Yale. At UNC, Clinton was heckled by the mob of

apoplectic at the mere mention of the Brady bill, later confiding to associates that that surprising response from the heart of our least country gave him the courage to go further than he intended in the quest for gun control. Sometimes, however, a president's remarks are all pulpit and no bully. Without a resonant metaphor, the speeches passed unnoticed.

Black churches unlock something primordial in Clinton—then Reverend, then father, the right faith, and the beliefs of religion. For hope, then, it should be no mystery that the President found his metaphors and mythic passion on the violence issue in mid-November speaking in his Mason Temple in Memphis, where Martin Luther King Jr. preached his last sermon.

"You can look at his appointment calendar for the month before and see the entire speech," says Steph Stephanopoulos. A lay event was a White House dinner in early November when the President and Mrs. Clinton met with a dozen socially gifted, political scientists, and other academics. At the dinner Alan Brinkley, a Columbia University historian, spoke of "the vibrant absence so far of a moral language in the Clinton presidency that rises above the needs of a particular legislative battle." Brinkley makes no claims to lasting influence; others sound ed smaller theories—but it is clear that Clinton heard the message. Use the bully pulpit.

The Memphis speech, like so much of Clinton's best rhetoric, was spontaneous. The speechwriters mostly gave the President talking points, there were no hints to the media



The power of the pulpit: Teddy used it well, Clinton's learning is

Clinton's words on violence convey more passion than anything since Peggy Noonan was president.



page; those words convey more passion than anything uttered from the White House since Peggy Noonan was president.

At that moment, Clinton began redeeming the faith of those who voted for him because he represented the generation forged by the civil rights movement. Clinton remains confident enough in his progressive heritage to speak candidly about racial matters. He is indeed, as Gergen puts it, "the first president we have had who could talk about

that the Memphis address would be other than boilerplate. As the President told friends later—taking on the shapshot of a graduate student who had just bluffed his way through his oral exams—he had merely planned to repeat his UNC speech. But as he sat near the pulpit during the forty-minute introduction—surrounded by old friends, inspired by the cheer, among the spirit of an old-time civil-rights man, the President moved away his cynical seat and stretched out on an entirely new speech.

The bully pulpit requires rhetoric that transcends clever sound bites and comforting falsehoods. Borrowing a flourish from Blair's ghost in a Christmas Card, Clinton asked his audience in Memphis, "If Martin Luther King were to appear at my side today and give us a report card on the last twenty-five years, what would he say? He would say, 'I fought to keep people from being so filled with hate that they would seek violence on black people. I did not fight for the right of black people to murder other black people with abandon.'"

very quiet, but that wasn't unusual. It's very quiet everywhere these days, with what people looked into their electronic cages from morning to night, conversely doing all their banking, shopping, and much of their jobs over the electronic apparatus that connects all living things on the planet. And I tried to stand for luck, I swear I did. The computer was down.

I exited any hopefulness and made my way past a thirty-five-year-old "Boy-ot Corolla" that had actual paper magazines on the bulletin, and even a book I was amazed to see, lying in the middle of the dashboard, some actual monetary units that people seem to employ before electronic transfers were used to effect for even the most minimal transactions. I went to the lobby door. I could see more than a hundred people talking about words, laughing, eating what looked like mayonnaise and mushrooms egg rolls on newspapers. One of them was playing a guitar.

"Information police?" I yelled as loud as I could. Then there was a hush of ugly black film in the back of my head, and the lights went out.

I woke up next to an actual chair. All my remote bookshelves had been removed from my head, and my cellular phone, notepad, and portable notepad had been disabled. I was in electronically muted as the day I came into the world and for the first time in my life, miles off even the most minute electronic vibrations of the superhighways. I was no character anymore. With my eyes out, who could possibly know where I was or even, when you get right down to it, whether I existed at all in any meaningful contemporary sense of the word?

The room was jammed with people. Many of them were reading things on paper. Some were even taking to one another in the most basic of ways, bodily-headed men of about fifty who was quite obviously a serious underwriter of exercise programming. On his chest was a little plastic stick-on that said, "Hi, I'm Ralph. Thank you for not bothering me about my smoking." He was smoking a large Macanudo. He was also, in my amazement, reading what looked like a physical newspaper. I wasn't sure at the time, because I had never seen one, but that man in white was in fact some pictures on it, true, but a whole lot of

words, too. And he was making some sort of moving his lips.

"In the name of your government and the group of eight companies that now own all significant business operations in these United States, I urge you to cease and desist your nonviolent activities and release me at once," I said in a commanding voice as I could muster. "This will each be issued a punitive bar code stamp, but beyond that no harm will come to any of you."

I might have saved my breath for all the good it did me. The group gave a hazy laugh and settled back into their various activities. The guy with the smokes smoked over.

"Hi," he said. "As you might have guessed, we live here. There are others like us in a lot of places. Most of us are former employees of companies that no longer exist. Drove over by the window seat at Paramount, for instance. Which there used to be the total bar was something at GE before it became a part of BellSouth. I was at Hiram Maguire before Barry Diller decided he wanted it as the foundation of a new shopping service."

"Where are the women and children?" I asked.

"Don't worry. They're someplace," said.

There was a pause as we both stopped things out.

"We try to throw a security wrench into the system," he said softly. "Like, we call up for information on the database and require a search that will cause someone to complete. We sign on and off the HBO and Showtime mini and newspapers, which drives the cable company crazy. But there isn't a heck of a lot that we can do to ensure a rational standard of living except to not participate, that's all. Which, by the way, is what we're asking of you. What to you say?"

"None," I said.

"But me ask you a couple of questions," said Ralph, leaning in now. I could see the tobacco on his clothing. It was a smel of long ago, of old comic books and discontinued after-shaves. I liked it. "Do you really enjoy reading your newspaper on television? Or would you prefer to go back to looking at it while sipping coffee in the lounge? Do you want to work, play games, and what would be the same monitor in the same room, or would

you like to go back to having different monitors for your computer, video, and game corridor, like they did in the old days? How about the men's or in your bathroom that Whistle Communications just in to replace your magazines? Like that? Of the five hundred channels of entertainment available to you, how many do you really want? Stay? Fight? Thrill? Do you want watching the World Series and Super Bowl on live TV? Do you want shopping for your clothes in a store? Do you want shopping out for a couple of minutes to make a deposit at the bank? Do you remember what it was like to take Volume 8 of the World Book off a shelf and find the entry for Sweden—without insisting an electronic search that also pulled up all associated topics from its various to scientific and associated the results was a coherent but totally mediocre report? In fact, had—his nose was almost touching mine—are you tired of our society? Did you ever really want to in contact at all? Did anyone ever ask you if you wanted to insure? Or did they just do it without asking you? Did they do it just because they could?"

I thought I was kind of bewildered by that point. Anyhow, he must have picked up something, because he uttered me, gave me back my monitor and control network implant, and told me I could go.

And yet, I didn't go, you know. I will. I know that I have a job, a life, to go back to that right now. I think I'm going to go and read a book. Maybe talk directly to some people, instead of doing it through an electronic bulletin board, browser with them, you know. And after that, I think I'll turn on the television and see, you know, watch something. Not do anything with it, you know. Just sit and watch. I'll just surf the eight or nine channels that aren't scrambled on the five hundred-channel system, and later maybe I'll play some computer games. They have an old IBM here that isn't even networked at all. I'd like that.

Not to say that all the fabulous stuff we have today isn't great. I mean that for a while, I'm pulling off the highway into this little car stop. Tomorrow maybe I'll send for my favorite Tim-Linn ping.

Over and out.

Stanley Bing is a contributing editor of *Esquire*. Mr. Comp. Doeser is not in paperback (yet).

The Sporting Life: Mike Lipton

The Anti-Shaq

Hakeem Olajuwon doesn't shatter backboards or appear on billboards, but he's head and shoulders above the NBA's best

HAKEEM OLAJUWON RISES from his chair in the restaurant of a New Jersey hotel. It is one of those hotels with an atrium that lets you see all the way to the top from the lobby. As Olajuwon slowly stands up, you get the idea that he will go forever, that when he disappears out, his head will be seen with the porthouse studies. He is telling the story of how it all began for him: the magic of being a basketball star the dream of coming to America. "I was seventeen years old," he says in respectable English made softer and more musical by the African still to a "I was playing baseball. Volleyball. I was a high jumper. I was a soccer goalie."

"How old were you then?" I ask.

"Seventeen," he says. "People kept telling me I should play basketball. But it was not in the picture for me. I was too busy dealing if I should concentrate on one of the sports I was already playing. Then one day I was in the gym, and there is the coach of the basketball team. An American. Oliver John says, 'Hey, big man, Mr. Johnson says.'"

Olajuwon smiles and begins to honor an imaginary basketball.

"He is standing there grinning at me, dribbling the ball. 'Hey, big man,' he says. 'Why don't you try a big man's game for a change?' He looked very cool, but I don't know what to say to him. Then he says, 'Hey, big man, I need your help. I'm trying to win some games.' I told him I wasn't sure. Finally he says to

me, 'You learn to play basketball, you can go to America. That's where all the big men are.'"

Olajuwon started practicing with the Nigerian national basketball team that day. "I did not know any of the rules, just that the game seemed to combine all the things I liked. Even the other games: the footwork, the running, and the jumping. The first day I blocked shots. I earned with that. And then all the other sports went out of my mind."

One year later, he was at the University of Houston. Then he was the first player taken in the 1984 draft (Michael Jordan went third). In 1986 Olajuwon was playing in the NBA finals against Larry Bird and the Boston Celtics.

His third professional season is nearly a month old now, and the Houston Rockets are on their way to a record tying 15-0 start. Olajuwon is second in the league in scoring and second in rebounding. He is coming off the best statistical season of his career: one in which the Rockets surpassed most of the pre-basketball world by winning fifty-five games. In a few days, the sporting press will begin to make the case that it is time for Olajuwon to receive the MVP award.

Olajuwon had no way of knowing at seventeen that he would soon find more big men in America than he had ever bargained for, that in the best seasons of his life he would have to contend not just with an old college adversary named Patrick Ewing but with David Robinson, Shawn Bradley, Alonzo Mourning, and Shaquille O'Neal. He could not have known that he would be part of the most talented group of centers ever to play in the NBA. It has taken nearly a decade, but the men from Lagos, Nigeria, are finally getting the attention he deserves.

"It's in a class by himself," Wilk Charleston says. "I can't think of another player who's better."

"Shaq," says Bill Walton. "He's the best player in basketball today. Not just the best center. The best player. Now Shaquille Jordan has retired, you can choose to call the best player. Now Olajuwon is the outcome of a game, the way Russell could, and Wilk, Magic, Bird, and Jordan."



Center giant: Olajuwon not only isn't the greatest player in the league today—it could be a form of trash talk.



A FRUGAL AND ANONYMOUS SCOT LONG YEARS AGO observed that the often-cited which had been used for bringing sherry, port, or madeira into the country might be employed therefore to *exhibit and exhibit*.

A PRIME NOTION IT TURNED OUT TO BE. The ends (particularly those that had retained sherry) imparted both a lustrous golden colour and a beguiling hint of richness to the meat.

SO SUCCESSFUL IT TURNED PRACTICE, in fact, that soon all the meat whistles (among them The Macallan) were awarded to that way. But time passed.

SHERRY CAME ONCE TO BE HAD FOR A FEW PENCE NOW COST SCORES OF POUNDS. And first one and then another found-hunt settled for more expedient alternatives, with the result that today The Macallan is the last meat whisky to be exclusively so matured. However.

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The Sporting Life: Mike Lupina

THERE WAS A TIME when giants roamed the NBA landscape. Basketball Chamberlain. Wilson Abdul-Jabbar. They were the men who ruled the game. In the '70s the league fell on troubled times, and the spotlight shifted to smaller men like Larry Bird and Magic Johnson. Now it seems the giants have returned, and they have brought a new appreciation of the game with them.

"It is always been a fun of big men," Olajuwon says. "I am always teasing our guards, telling them that this game was created for big men. But my stance is that I love to watch the guards. I love to see them dribble."

He is on his feet again, the strategy ball in his hands, the court in his mind, his own empty arena. Worcester with him to do map to him as the hardman, smiling, game on his red mesh basketball jersey and black shorts. No center in the NBA has the speed and reach and vision like Olajuwon has, no seven-foot player has ever turned the reigning under the basket into a form of bluff in the way he has.

"I started out as a conventional big man, my role to the basket," he says. "But I was bored being that kind of player. I began to study the guards." He explains how he developed a crossover dribble. He dips and fakes and takes a long step past the cliche, then swings the ball the other way.

They all caught on to that, so I must judge the move like the "he says and says toward a huge poster placed in his life, so the place were the opposing center, now far-forward, as Hakeem the Dream came one way and goes another.

"I had to adapt," he says. "I would get the ball and three men would converge on me. I did not know how to put the ball on the floor. I would only go into a dribble, and that's what I was told. I wanted the position to be most free. I wanted to be a free man."

Olajuwon admits that he is still standing and sits down sheepishly. "You look around at all the other centers," he says. "We all can block shots. We all can score. We all are good rebounders. It comes down to a question of whose style do you like the most?"

"Aren't you the best now?" I ask. He looks at his hand. "I do not get into shots, and I am not," he says. "I would be a free man, like a free man."

"Do you ever talk on the court?" "I do not talk the much," he says.

"That is not interesting to me. That is not a game. I only want to be with serious people. That is a game of skill, not a game of luck."

When Jordan retired last season, Shaquille O'Neal rushed in to fill the void, and with every rebound, commercial, magazine cover, compact disc, and biography. He is the new phenomenon in sports, part of a generation of American athletes whose futures are secure before they even really have to put any points on the board.

Olajuwon is different. He is the Anti-Shaq. He sits up his own interview. There is no studio of PR, fans, lawyers, and agents surrounding him. After ten years in the game, he does not earn money on the game as an endorsement, the way some of the others do.

That does not mean that he works for free. Olajuwon signed a five-year, \$10 million deal with the Rockets last year after a brief contract dispute. Now he says he will finish out his career in Houston, searching for the dream that he chased hard in the way he has. He says that John (Living) had with the other, the one Rick Barry got when his Worcester team finally won.

"I have been close to many times," Olajuwon says softly. "I know people are taking a close look at my career now. They see how my game has changed. I am very grateful for that. But I want to win. In the end, you are not judged by statistics. You are judged by winning. To win a championship, that really is the only dream that matters."

He has never been the most famous player or the richest, but Olajuwon has been a remarkable presence in the NBA. He considers himself fortunate. Basketball never out to be the game of his dreams. He looks back now like the best player ever, but he is not. He is a player and a player who is a player. And there is the almost sleepy elevation of a high jumper when he pulls up and shoots over other players, his arms raised, legs played on his distinctive style.

He has no act. He doesn't do backboards. That fourteen years after he first picked up a basketball, Olajuwon is the best player in the game. It is a small name for the big man from Nigeria. He is really really talk about it much. But he is one of the great players in history.

Mike Lupina writes for the New York Daily News and is a regular on ESPN's The Sports Reporters.

American Scene: Robert Lipsyte

R.I.P., Tonto

White men may have taken the land from the Indians, but Chief Oren Lyons won't let them steal his people's story

WE ARE SITTING on the raw-plank deck of a log cabin—no telephone, no electricity, no plumbing—on the highest green hill of the Onondaga Reservation, seven thousand rural acres in the middle of New York State. The sun is so high and hot it seems to be melting the tall pines. If I strain to hear the muffled hoofbeats of nearby buffalo in the meadow below—and overlook the chief's Iroquois nation wagon in the driveway—I can pretend that it is taking place a hundred years ago, and I am not another liberal white reporter come to ask an aging Indian—Sagoyewew, Chief Joseph, Geronimo—what wisdom he has for the troubled nation that has rooted him in his own land in these final moments of the century. The concern has as proper, as they did a hundred years ago, men with rifles paroled the sun of the sun.

The chief, Oren Lyons, whose family may well encompass my own, tells a story early from his youth. Sagoyewew was a working partner, not a pet, a mean old spotted hawk who hunted with Lyons through those years right after his father left, when the young Onondaga kept his mother, his name, and his unbroken faith with his gun. He shot pheasant and rabbit and salmon and Sagoyewew pointed and found them. The woodland was those superlatives. Oren tried not to let Sagoyewew follow the deer or get a sense for flesh, but somewhere along the way he began to findance around the reservation.

One night Sagoyewew latched up to the door of the house, his chest blown open. She died in Oren's arms. The blood had made it a simple breakfast. The killer, a neighbor, grabbed and old, had wanted to see him. He let Sagoyewew get close enough to see him, been here for a clear shot from his doorway. It would have been easy to chase him, even to let her take a chicken and then demand ransom from the Lyons family. The chiefs would have ordered that. But the old man was bitter and had killed on his mind.

So Oren burned Sagoyewew and buried him in the meadow where the old man kept the two horses he

used for plowing and transport. Oren that only one of them. Nothing was ever said. Simple justice.

Thirty-five years later, Oren Lyons is a spokesman for the Iroquois Confederacy, a college professor, an internationalist. I ask, "You still think you did the right thing?" "Absolutely."

"I never crossed your mind to shoot the old man?" Lyons looks around. "That would have been something a white man might do."

We have had visitors on this exchange for the past ten years, and old Sagoyewew may have become more important to me than to Lyons, somewhere in this dog story, I think, is a metaphor, a defining moment, a key to the sensibility of the modern chief and to my own raging feeling that this "native" population of fewer than two million, perhaps a third of whom live beneath the official poverty level, has something critical to say that we all need to hear.

The telling of the Indian story has always revealed more about the white man than the red man. It began with the "hardens," which gave way to the gifts but now the Indians tell seem to have evolved into a confining hybrid of welfare wagon man and raging capitalism. And if nothing else, Oren Lyons reminds me that we still refuse to see the



Honor the chiefs: Lyons (right) with a Iroquois warrior at an Indian Thanksgiving celebration at the Cathedral of St. John the Divine in New York.

American Scene: Robert Lipsyte

Indians as they see themselves—as complex, struggling, linguistically aware whose language is intrinsically intertwined with the white man's.

That is the time, after all of the new Indian wars—Indians are choosing when men again, and one another, by trying one another, and trying contracts for what is left of their land, and rarely valuable for gambling casinos, water rights, rice-wheat dumps.

A dog story? A metaphor? Simple justice?

Of course, it could be just liberal sentimentalism (as when a liberal or a reformer takes the average talking of a horse, who probably had a name too).

Or it could be the love of the my people. If Indians are so hard to be understood, they are probably so basic to be understood (is there a plan)?

"We have our instructions from the Creator," says Lyons. "So long as there is one to sing one to dance, one to speak, and one to listen, we don't give up."

"Give me a break, I'm not Carlos Casanovi," Lyons says.

Lyons sits his head and laughs, which he does early and often, his gray ponytail slipping against his broad back. He is not someone to be trifled with, but he can be teased and needed because Indians do that in friendship and as a way of recognizing, sending up, trial balloons, avoiding declarations and confessions. I am telling him that I am not necessarily his media outlet, and he is telling me not to let him know.

After a handful years' shafts and responses about each other again. How could it be that these people, who don't count politically because they don't vote or run, are back on the front pages? How could they have been so recently beaten without being beaten?

NOW WE ARE SITTING on the grassy shore of Seneca Lake, hearing just come from a lecture match at Hobart College. Lyons, a former college all-American and a recently inducted member of the Lacrosse Hall of Fame, has accepted a piece of sculpture honoring the Indian "contributor" to the sport.

Indians invented the game, a boat versus bowl that could engage hundreds on a wide and cover miles. It was the Black Rock, the French, the Jesuits, said it is clear because the stick re-

sembled them of a bishop's crozier. Indians called the game "humpo hump," then the white man called it a lacrosse and the lacrosse stick. By the late nineteenth century they had also learned the lacrosse from playing in international amateur cooperation for accepting travel money. Indians were not surprised when Jim Thorpe, part white, part Sioux and Tom, and the greatest athlete of his day, was stripped of his 1912 Olympic gold medals by amateur sports officials for playing minor league baseball for pay. Lyons, who remembers when Thorpe visited his reservation and watched him play lacrosse, views it all of a piece: the white man exploits the Indian, then dumps the Indian when he gets too big or in the way.

Lyons helped create an Inquest national team that has modeled its way back into international competition. Not surprisingly, Lyons' thirty-seven-year-old daughter, Lyonsie, his thirty-year-old son, Eric, and his ten-year-old grandson, Mosey, are outstanding players. The national team's youth squads have traveled from Indian boys and girls from basketball and basketball.

Sports and art, traditional aspects of the show, give young Lyons early time on the set. He is a good amateur finger-painting artist, and his drawings of eagles and wolves were of magazine illustration quality. But it was lacrosse—the lifeblood of the people—in which he made his mark as a teenager, playing in the shadow of his own father, a successful pro who would eventually be named with his name.

"My father told me, 'You have to keep your eye on the ball. No matter what happens, don't let them catch your eye, 'cause then they're done.'"

Ona pauses, looks on someone to pronounce the metaphor. "They all I ever took from him, but it's all you need. There were not many ways a young boy could prove he's inherited beyond high school, the Army, and lacrosse."

In the late 1980s, Roy Simmons Jr., son coach of nearby Syracuse University, accused Lyons, "Oren was sentimental. He was quick as a cat, extremely courageous. I wanted him. But there was no way I think he only had about a year of high school before he dropped out."

"I quit school in the eighth grade," Oren says. "I had a head-on with the teacher, just hostile to run, didn't

like me. I tried my best. I was lucky to understand early it wasn't about me, it was racism. And racism helped me mature myself."

He bowed, drank, stretched, and raised left hand as he drafted in 1990, at twenty. He joined the first Authors, but without credits (which later made his brother Les a Green River hero), and was typically among the Indians who kept losing his temper. At twenty-three, he returned to the reservation and his family (and later his wife and baby daughter) by painting house portraits for local bars at ten dollars each.

It was then that coach Simmons re-discovered Lyons. His own son was entering Syracuse, and the coach wanted his son to play on a good team. He needed a great player. "The semester had already started, so I grabbed the dean of admissions and dragged him down to this restaurant, Nore's Arena. There was a painting of Jack Dempsey, looked like he was going to punch out and let you go. That got Oren into the School of Fine Arts, and I put the best goal I ever had."

Eventually, with Oren on goal and two other all-Americans on attack, Roy Jr. and the football star Jon Bowens, the Oren Syracuse team was undefeated. Oren encouraged Roy Jr., an accomplished sculptor, to change his major from physical education to art. He has been an Oren brother ever since.

"I was not different from other Indian athletes," says Roy Simmons Jr., who replaced his father as coach. "I was on time, he accepted discipline. But most Indian athletes are hard to read. Some. Never cry or admit pain. Whining and losing are not in our nature. They like to play the game, sit and take hits and when the dust settles, when it's over, just shake hands. They I accept not being number one. And they'll never admit they make a mistake. That's hard for a white coach to deal with."

"It's perplexing to white coaches," says Lyons. "Self respect and individuality are very important to Indians. They're very sensitive, they expect respect. You can't yell at them or they'll just drop up and go."

They walked out on British officers who berated them as they drove the Revolution, and they walk off when the American yells at them, and they'll walk off teams."

American Scene: Robert Lipsyte

Roy Jr. attended Lyons' graduation party at Onondaga in 1990. Not only was Lyons the first person in a generation from the reservation to receive a degree, but he had been awarded Syracuse's Orange Key in an outstanding scholar-athlete. There was beer and venison and dancing, and then silence as Oren opened his many poems.

"Most of them were good," says Roy Jr. "I got the sense they were proud of him, but they wanted him to remember who he was and where he came from, and not to side with the other guys."

At the Hobart ceremony, Lyons networks "the other guys." A chunky, middle-size man of thirty-three with the easy swing of an old athlete who thinks he is still in shape, he moves among the green blazers and plaid pants as if he were in a U.S. colonial party—where he does the same thing, usually in the same clothes: his signature jeans and embroidered shirt.

Afterward we drive to the lake with take-out chicken. "That was once all ours," he says, watching the wind ruffle the water. "We lived with the lake, with the land, as part of it. The white man's religion, talks about running the earth which means putting up your covers by water so you can watch your garbage from away."

"You know, when you're taken something from somebody and they're still there looking at you, it's got to be hard. We haven't disappeared. The land is here and we're still here. Their feet are always moving, but they're not going anywhere, and they're saying, 'We'll do this and that with this program, and we're just saying, 'You have our land.'"

They carry of the land is Indian country. Deep rock. The West didn't get wild until the white people got there. There's no such word as wild in the Indian languages. The closest we can get to it is a word for "We were first people."

We finish our food and stroll back to the Teyan. Lyons is in a contemplative mood. "There's a moral, not an every human being. We have to keep reminding people we have to keep carrying them to what's good at them. We have to teach the question, the only question. Is it right? So simple. But if people don't want to follow that, the game is up. It's all over."

It might not be so simple to everyone else. Indians who have allied themselves with the U.S. government see Oren Lyons as a sign of weakness. A traditionalist, that with so many consciousness in the media and among such white funders, Roche, fellow, and modernist. His stand against reservation casinos has made him an unpopular among those Indians who are gambling at the stars of the buffalo, a limited account that will feed and clothe them forever. And government officials haven't yet found his handle.

This is a man who keeps refusing to join presidential transition teams because he doesn't want to be a "White Indian." He has spent so much time in the progressive church groups and the international confederations of indigenous peoples on an Onondaga project he made him self "lost anyone outside him for a U.S. citizen. He explains the government's willingness so far to let him stand on that homemade project as part of an "Oren" policy. "Don't Fuck with Indians."

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30 DAY
NO-MONEY
BACK
GUARANTEE



Orange man: With Lyons and Jani Lyons in the field, the 1977 *Worms* movie never lost word and-wild.

"If you have a community a heritage, a place to go back to, you can be very strong, you can resist," he says. "I know who my father and my mother and my grandparents were. I know who the Navajo was, and I know the songs. He knows his rightful name. He was born Jo-Ag-Chah-Ho (Bright Sun Moves a Path in the Snow), a member of the Wolf Clan of the Oronogies (People of the Hills)—sun leopards of the Haidenawans (People of the Longhouse), made up of the Oronogies, Mohawks, Seneca, Cayuga, Oneida, and Tuscarora. The French called them Iroquois, the British called them the Six Nations."

As Lyons, an associate professor of American studies at the State University of New York at Buffalo, is quick to point out, the Dutch, the French, the British, later the Americans, all dealt with the Six Nations, individually and as a group, as if they were sovereign foreign states, which is why they deserved that name. There were alliances and treaties. As were root treaties, they tended to be few documents. (The idea that Indians were always chained in negotiations is part of the false image of them as savages who needed to be "civilized," protected, or exterminated. In most cases, the treaties were simply broken by whites.)

who wanted a badly wounded Texas Ranger and named him back to health. On the PBS TV series and in the movies, Tonto was portrayed by Jay Silverheels, a Mohawk who was discovered by Hollywood at the 1921 Olympics while playing. Lyons notes, however, "Every year when we started practice I told the boys this story," Rick Hill, the ex-coach of the Iroquois Nationals, says to me. "Gave 'em something to hope for."

"One Tonto is enough," Lyons agrees.

Both may be right. Tonto no longer appears in the films or another in Dennis Quaid's *Willie in Bush*, or in *The Last of the Mohicans*, and, of course, in the person of every Indian who shows an air for with the white man. Tonto is considered by some Indians to be an Uncle Tomahawk or an "apple"—red on the outside, white on the inside—but it's most complex.

In *Custer Died for Your Sins*, Vine Deloria Jr., a Sioux, wrote: "Tonto was everything that the white man had always wanted the Indian to be. He was a little slower, a little dumber, had much less vocabulary and rode a dapple horse. Somehow 'Tonto' was always there like the Negro butler and the Oriental gardener. Tonto represented a silent, subservient subsequence of Anglo-

Saxon whose duty was to do the bid ding of the all-wise white hero. "Nevertheless, Indians saw a future in 'Tonto' according to Deloria. Because he sometimes pulled the masked rider out of tight spots 'by some supposedly Indian trick,' he reaffirmed 'the old Indian way' for Indians and laid 'the groundwork for the eventual rejection of the white man and his strange ways.'"

Tonto as a hero doesn't seem so far from where you realize that Indian resistance is lost the land according to be represented by the Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) or the reservation police ("opper copes" to some)—seemed to have died four days after Christmas, 1950, when the 2nd Cavalry (Custer's old regiment) massacred more than two hundred of the men, women, and children caught up in the religious frenzy called Ghost Dancing. An Indian prophet had promised his followers that the whites would be driven from the land and the buffalo would return. Ironically (in a deplorable word in Indian affairs), the Ghost Dance swept the reservations and absorbed the energy that might have gone into armed rebellion.

The massacre took place on the Pine Ridge Reservation of South Dakota, near Wounded Knee Creek, where Chief Crazy Horse's band was hunted.

Chris Lyons was an Oronogian who died in 1975 when the reservation was based on that same hollowed ground. From a distance, it seemed to be yet another struggle for control of a reservation between "blackies" and "broccies," between traditionalists and Christians or, depending on your politics, between hard-line fundamentalists versus the buffaloes to return and progressivism trying to bring Indians into modern life.

But Lyons saw further elements of the government pitting Indian against Indian in the name of assimilation and "democracy." The supposedly left-wing American Indian Movement was on the side of the traditionalists and the FBI was on the side of the Guardians of the Ogishla Nation, or GONCNA, who supported the tribal president.

Indians began dying regularly at Pine Ridge, but it was not until 1975, when two FBI agents were killed in a shoot-out, that the government got involved. An AIM member, Leonard Peltier was convicted under circumstances that make it seem fair to call him a political prisoner. From a book about the inci-



DOLCE & GABBANA

dent, Peter Mathews' education in the Spirit of Crazy Horse, was successfully suggested for seven years. If Peter emerged as a surfer to the cause, AIM leader Dennis Banks became its mouthpiece. A Cheyenne who had lost his language in BIA boarding schools, Banks had roamed city streets, had served in the Air Force, had been jailed for burglary. AIM was a movement born in prison, created by urban Indians starved, but rarely shown into, the civil rights and antiwar movements of the Sixties.

Seeing the two men together at Woodshed River—the family hideout, where Banks (who, like AIM partner, Russell Means, appeared in *The Last of the Mohicans* some twenty years later) and the calm, professional Lyons—was to be able to imagine the war chief and the peace chief of the great tribes of the last century. Banks eventually became a federal judge. He made his way to Chicago to ask for the court's blessing. When Lyons had never accepted federal funds or given up sovereignty in any way and because it considers itself a separate nation, local police or federal forces cannot enter the reservation without permission. (Once certain rules are barred, there may be as many as two thousand Ojibwegians, but no one knows for sure, or will say.) Once the chiefs accepted Banks, they would be obligated to protect him with their lives. Banks predicted his own death: the tribe he would be with the tribe he would be with the tribe he would be with.

For whom, Banks represented the Indian who had to be beaten or bought off. But if Indians were to survive with dignity, it was leaders like Lyons, with feet in both cultures, who would make it happen. Lyons, after all the sacrifices after a traditional upbringing, became accepted by mainstream white standards, then returned to the reservation as a leader, always trading a hand in the white world. His strength, he insists, is in his upbringing.

Hunting was Oren's first rise of mischief.

"My father would send me out with a rifle. If I missed, he'd give me a horse. If I killed, he'd let me stay. The discipline of the hunt is very important. You've got to eat. You have to respect skill. And you're to touch with everything around you."

After graduation from Syracuse, Lyons moved to Madison Avenue in

ten years he rose from pursuing areas to head planning director for seasonal lines at Norcross Sporting Goods, an experience, he says, that "grounded me in the American people."

Chick Lyons took him into the dark upper reaches of the psyche. The last time Lyons went hunting with white men was thirty years ago. A group of his former students, Will Stevens, organized a Caswell Mountain hunt on the first day of deer season.

"That's a funny story, what you understand," he said. "Twenty arch bows wrapped in their thighs, his hands. They almost hit some guy in another group, missed him by six inches, and he fired back. They went to slug it out. I stepped in and volunteered to step back and cook dinner."

"White men have all the rules, what kind of gun to use and what dates to use them, but not how you treat each other. I didn't want any kids growing up in the city, becoming Indians."

By age 10 his marriage was flourishing, and he was under pressure to return to the Nation.

Although Lyons was a member of the Wolf Clan, one of the traditional family groupings within the Ojibwa, it was a Turtle Clan member who convinced him back to the reservation of goldpans, woodlands, vegetable gardens, many traditions, and a building known as the place on the coast. Women select the Ojibwa chiefs, then to appoint them in the longhouse, select old hunters. It was a traditional time throughout the country, throughout Indian country, and the Nation needed leaders.

The day-to-day work of the traditional Ojibwa chiefs is unpaid and unremunerated work. Typical of what Lyons did with him on his return was a violent act in a long-running feud between two neighboring families. A young man shot an older man in the leg. The chiefs and clan members moved as quickly to prevent a massacre. The chiefs also didn't want local white law enforcement involved; lawyers, paid lawyers, paid time, they believe, do not lead to justice or to satisfaction, merely to more anger.

The chiefs and the clan members divided between the families for weeks, discussing, negotiating, mediating, often in that casual, easy way Indians have of saying things lightly

to avoid backing someone against a wall. There were more moments. After the older man's son took a shotgunner to the chest's son, a reservation was reached that this was an acceptable release of rage and should be accepted.

Eventually, everyone came around or was worn down by talk and peer pressure. The wounded man's hospital bills were paid by the shooter's family, and the shooter completed the house renovations the victim had been working on. And then the elders began discussing the underlying causes of the feud.

It's the domestic policy. Foreign affairs are more complex. In 1979, after Lyons's return to the reservation, Lyons refused to allow the state on the level to widen a highway. The head chief, Leon Stenseth, with Lyons at his elbow, drew a line in the dirt, as if to say, "This is where the United States ends. North of this line, this government of New York has no jurisdiction and doesn't want to look weak. State troopers were named for an assault against Ojibwa after when they were abruptly called away to put down the Alaska prison riots."

By 1980 the new Mohawk reservation in northern New York and southern Canada, known as Akwesasne, erupted in what was described in the white press as a civil war between two tribes and tribes that contained evolution of the Indian from domesticated savage to off-white Chinaman. But to Lyons and other mediators, the Mohawks were a continuation of the assault on Indian sovereignty. When government, whose law enforcement, white missionaries, white criminals, were contributing to the violence in order to draw a wedge into the people and get their land, either directly (by takeover) or indirectly (through permitting or taxation).

Struggling—cigarettes, guns, dope, and marijuana—is a key industry in Akwesasne; the shadowy Warner Society, with its reported links to Libya (including a quarter-million-dollar gift from Mouammar Qaddafi), is variously represented in a real mafia and a post-1968, neo-fascist force. By the Nineties the stolen and the body count were getting higher. Canebbling had reached Mohawk. In 1993, when getting had started into his hole Ojibwa, the federal government recognized a

prolonging Harvard-educated Indians who'd lived on a traditional chief.

Casino gambling, of course, is a national issue. By the end of 1990, fifty-two tribes were operating one hundred casinos and big bangs in seven states, raising in about \$1 billion for the year. One nearly defunct tribe of two hundred in Connecticut, the Mashantucket Pequot, grossed \$1 million during last July in its parish from gambling complex, which featured "sweepstakes cards" and hostesses in Pequotian costumes.

No wonder there has been a sudden rise in anger among Indians trying to prove their heritage and restore their tribes to qualify for gambling income. Maybe it's the return of the buffalo, although Lyons was it as the destruction of what is left of the traditional values.

But then he is a traditionalist. In his years back at Ojibwa, he's been teaching at Buffalo and helping to organize the International Traditional Circle of Indian Elders and Chiefs. Lyons cofounded a national Indian newspaper, *Diyabek*, and edited, with Stevens' teacher and journalist John Mohawk, the remarkable *Field*

in the Land of the Two, an attempt to address the historical scholarship of the civil class impact on American democracy and the U.S. Constitution.

For now, though, the responsibility of local chiefs seems to absorb most of Lyons's energy. A few years ago, three Ojibwa shopkeepers including the son of a clan mother, defied the chiefs by refusing to pay any share of the profits of their gas station, cafe, and smaller shops to the tribe, although they paid no state or federal taxes because they were members of the Nation living on the reservation. They lost spring, when their businesses were shut down by a massive blockade of clan mothers and teenage girls, the shopkeepers crossed a highway line drawn by the Pequot and Shawnee—they called it law and the sheriff.

The last time Lyons visited Ojibwa, the invasion was dying, but the sheriff, a white man who believed in treaties, was refusing to respond. The wedge had been jammed into the Nation. A blockade of junkies can keep the businesses in as well, as well as well happen to you."

Banks illuminated the spray-painted signs on the cars, across the cars.

It is quiet in Lyons's log cabin on the highest of Ojibwa's green hills. We are talking about simple justice and consensus, the question is it right and wrong, and we might have been talking a hundred years ago. The site may have been sacred, but it's still all about real estate and religion.

Lyons goes outside to pump some water in the flickering light of a lantern. Lyons, I study a painting he has never finished, a wolf lying along a woodland trail.

Lyons returns. "Being a Wolf myself, I have a feeling for the mystery of that animal. He is on a mission. He is being pushed. He disappeared from many places, driven out. He is feared for whatever reason. He is respected for whatever reason."

"Another metaphorical dog story?"

Lyons. "The chief's voice is soft. 'I think that whatever happens to the wolf happens to us. And whatever happens to us will happen to you.'"

"The street- there's taxicabs, gas fumes, and buses and bank robberies and what have you all in a single second on a street corner, with jackhammers going, and that is supposedly the art of mirroring society. Well, that's not my belief. Art to me doesn't mirror society. The very essence of art is subversive to society, and whatever society is putting out, art's got to do something else."

—Bob Dylan

"World Gone Wrong"

new from Bob Dylan. In stores now.

COLUMBIA

Yes.

By Tad Friend

Lisa Palac, 30, editor

HQ: San Francisco
LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT: Editing *Palace*, her magazine
REQUIRE:

"I say to men, 'Gee, you're just a little bit broken and you're broken in love and you throw me down on the bed and make me sick, your cock.' They're horrified—it's just against all they've been taught. 'No, no, it would degrade you.' Exactly. Degradate when I ask you to."

That's the message from a new generation of women thinkers, who are embracing sex (and men). Call them "do me" feminists. But can they save the penis from the grassy field of American history?

Naomi Wolf, 31, writer

HQ: Washington, D.C.
LATEST BOOK WRITTEN: *Porn is On Porn: The New Female Power and How It Will Change the Twenty-first Century*
SEX TALK ON TV:

"If I were a man, and I were expected to look fast, shelter fast, and give her an orgasm, I would drop to every magazine prostitute I have."

NAOMI WOLF HAS A FEW QUESTIONS: "Do you want to make love? Do you want to fuck? Do you want me to go down on you? Do you want me to ejaculate in you?" We're having a drink in a quiet Manhattan bar, and Wolf checks around to see if she's been overheard, then grins and runs a hand through her famous mass of hair. "This is not an sexual proposition—though, for future reference, I grossly vote yes to a), b), and c), and no to d), pending further clarification—has a partner on the 'sassy vagina' men and women can establish that their partners desire further intercourse. Wolf's explicit memo is all so serious to jolt a male journalist long schooled in unapologetic politeness, and to reverse the traditional Tenses grant, Jane too—to show men how sexual aggression feels. "It's sup-

bell hooks, 41, professor

HQ: Oberlin, Ohio
LATEST BOOK WRITTEN: *Sisters of the Rose: Black Women in Self-Discovery*
SEX TALK ON TV:

"If all we have to choose from is the long dick or the superhard dick, we're in trouble. We need a versatile dick, who admits that intercourse isn't all there is to sexuality, who is as gentle as a touch sex on Monday, ending pussy on Tuesday, and coiffing on Wednesday."

posed to be okay to say, 'I have a question.' Wolf says "Well, we need this for the revolution."

Such talk would be a shock if Wolf weren't the woman who wrote *The Beauty Myth*, *Hunger for Memory*, *An Unbound Woman*. Her says best-seller blamed powerful men for the backlash that was "chicken[ing] power in every level in re-developing women's lives" and commended, with male emphasis, that boys rape girls "as a normal course of events."

But Wolf has a gripe for grasping and popularizing the issue of the moment, and her treatment of men and sex in her just-published second book, *Fire with Fire: The New Female Power and How It Will Change the Twenty-first Century*, is almost a who-dun-it transaction. "Here is my secret, that should be a feminist secret, no longer," she darts one-year-old Wolf now writes "The male body is home to me, my cock, my whelpood."

Katie Roiphe, 25, writer

HQ: Princeton, New Jersey
LATEST BOOK WRITTEN: *The Morning After: Sex, Power, and Porn in the Twentieth Century*
SEX TALK ON TV:

"I'm not a 'do me' feminist. I'm not a feminist in that it creates a dividing space for men. It makes men into algorithms—along, behind, outside, only interested in sex."



"In my weaker or dumber moments," she briefly adds, "I am perfectly capable of wanting to be assaulted by a young, noble seventeen-year-old soccer player who long to do my every bidding."

NUDDY SPORTS PLAYERS? Clearly something new is afoot. Three years ago, Candie Fujita gained attention by upbraiding fansites for ignoring sex's dark, carnal, sexual side, but now Princeton graduate student Katie Rappaport is using the anti-dieting movement for encouraging the old stereotype that men want intercourse and women don't. The media has taken increasing notice of the not gentle—who don't mind casual, banging, as long as it's their demand of fabulous incomes who love control and rough sex. And every once you turn on the radio you're dared to parody Madonna's love, or Liz Phair cries that she wants to take you doggy-style.

These apparently random phenomena are actually bordering on concern for a bold feminist departure. For years radical feminists such as Catherine MacKinnon and Andrea Dworkin have held sway, declaring sex had and men were, but now comes a generation of young women who have read the theory thought about it—and rejected it. That purposeful bawdiness spreading across the land, indeed by feminism, is the sound of those young women beating their morals into history.

These "sexual agency" or "sexual empowerment" agencies have no collective platform, they often strongly disagree, and they have being indiscriminately lumped together. But from lesbian erotica to Calista to Clark University professor Christina Hoff Sommers there's a commonality of interest strong enough for us to do some dispassionate lumping and declare it a movement, a movement producing sexual liberation, sexual equality, and the redemption of men from the cheap heap of theory. Call it "do me" feminism.

"What's going on is not your mother's feminism," says Patricia Ireland, president of the National Organization for Women. "The young women who grew up in his households feel the need to assert that they're not animals, not slaves, that they don't believe all sex is rape. But they're all so nobody's victim. There are two parts to these young women's view. One, they're going to enjoy sex, two, as their women."

And these. They're going to talk about it—about chicks about pussy, about hitting and sucking—in ways designed to make the average male blush. This locomotive rhetoric, heard across the appropinquity spectrum from Al Sharpton to Rush Limbaugh, works as follows: Pretend the quarry in your headlights, then run it over. The do-me feminists are choosing locker-room talk to shift discussion from the fetters of men to the fetters of feminism, from the paradigm of sexual abuse to the paradigm of sexual pleasure. They want to return sex from the political realm to the personal.

In short, they want to have fun.

"They are selfish bitches," the Calista writes about the frisky lesbians in her collection of stories, *Mocha Bitch*, but "if you assume them, they could show you a very good time, nor will they say something that will make you feel bad about yourself under the guise of upgruffing your self and your politics."

The rules of this brave new world aren't yet written. But women are already drafting some guidelines. "If all we have to choose from is the limp dick or the atrophied dick,

were in trouble," says bell hooks, a professor of women's studies at Oberlin College. "We need a venereal dick who admits that intercourse isn't all there is to sexuality who can negotiate rough sex on Monday using pussy on Tuesday and sucking on Wednesday."

Sounds great, right? Right? I'm guessing there's an uneasy silence among all these venereal dicks out there, a suspicion that now that what they said they wanted is here—men women who'll discuss and do the many without thinking it nasty—they aren't really feminists, even some of the women who are trumpeting their sexual capers worry about being seen as bitches, doxies, strumpets. In asserting the deep track of our ideas about sex, the do-me feminists are turning up a widespread fear of abandoned female sexuality.

That fear has mostly into Catherine MacKinnon's and Andrea Dworkin's theory that all sex is fraught with male dominance and female submission. They would the do-me feminists for suggesting that equality can be unilaterally secured by a woman, instead of being collectively secured from men. MacKinnon and Dworkin believe that men use sex as a weapon to point women down and that women have come, through brutal training, to like it that way.

"The so-called sexual agency people," MacKinnon says, "would women by assuming that living out a role men have assigned women as sex—the 'sexuality in this' where as opposed to the 'valuable pure madonna'—amounts to sexual freedom."

THREE YEARS AGO, Betty Friedan worried in *The Feminine Mystique* that focusing on sexual issues would damage the women's movement. It was a cry in the wilderness. Ever since Emma Goldman's free love beliefs burst against Carry Nation's pure morality, feminism has been men over sex.

The current debate bubbles up around pornography, date rape, sexual harassment, and S-M (or, as its practitioners prefer, B-M) is sex only what happens between two consenting adults who whisper endorsements before a cedar log fire, Marooned thumping in the background! Or only what happens when a woman has nine shots of tequila and a carded copulate by a hooting gang of four brothers! Does "no" mean "maybe"? Is "psychological coercion" real? Does mere news of date rape make women to stop it as it's happening, or do they just feel worse the more they? When *Hungry* (a feminist erotica) "HAUT! Yeah, I'm a slut. My body belongs to me. I sleep with who I want," is that "sexual agency" or an unwitting expression of "petrified colonization"? Which is

NAME:

Mary Gaitskill, 39, novelist

AGE:

Location: California

LAST DATE WITH YOU:

Penetration, Poland Plus

SEX-TALK INFLUENCES:

"My women are tough as painted nails and wanting to do all these perverted, hairy things, only the men are too stupid and clumsy to do it with them. I'm not condoning disrespect for women, but the pleasure of sexual violence is not collecting only men's bile."



women, the construction worker who congratulates you for "nice tits," or the boss who leersly insists you accompany him to Hooters? What happens when people throw a tip of a guy with a union gring it to a babe with a tattoo? In the pleasure "giving a rat" a denial of female sexual authority or a recognition of basic, anatomical functional life?

"You can wear lipstick, as long as you like it, even though the cosmetics industry is an instrument of oppression," Kate Reghe endorcesly writes of the "paradox" induced by the conflicting messages women receive. "It's great that men stare at you as a party, but they shouldn't stare if you don't want them to."

Reghe's book, *The Morning After Sex, Fear and Pleasure in Olympia*, has been so controversial chiefly because the twenty-five-year-old crossdresser, the old tape culture for turning women into victims, and because she wants to put the burden of sexual conduct—and of unchanging society's conflicting messages—firmly on women.

Many women reject Reghe's argument, but most seem to share her general feeling that feminism has become an impediment to women's goals—even as they applaud its successes and stated aims. In a recent *Time/CNN* poll, 54 percent of American women and equal pay for equal work, the movement's leading issue—is very important, and 74 percent of women in a 1991 Gallup poll said women are better off than they had been ten years before. In only 37 percent of American women in another *Time/CNN* poll said they consider themselves feminists, and in another poll, a mere 30 percent of college women endorsed the term.

Feminists have usually attributed this discrepancy to the media's having loaded women with a crippling, oppressive burden: ugly, hairy, hairless, hair-bearing, bad-breasted bristles. (Feminism began floating through newspapers in 1919, the time, used by both young housewives and young professional women to distinguish themselves from their predecessors, soon became as mainstream a cardinal as penicillin.)

In her 1984 essay book, *Fuckish: The Undiscovered Woman Against American Values*, Susan Faludi suggests that this turn against feminism was born "within the rules of the New Right" and taken up by "the [male dominated] media, popular culture, and advertising," which combined to internalize women into being the revolution prior to us.

"The de me feminists are challenging this view," Debbie Russ Faludi, I don't believe exists in the media compared to underclass feminism," says Rene Denfeld, a twenty-year-old from Portland, Oregon, who's writing *The New Victims*, which ruminates the obligatory cabaret of a schlocky *Why Young Women Are Abandoning the Women's Movement*.

"The term's negative connotations stem directly from the movement itself," Denfeld says. "We're told we'll be raped, sexually harassed, and treated unequally at work—which, if we listened, would leave us feeling hopeless. We need to reclaim the feminist label for ourselves, because while most of the young women I talk with believe in equal pay, job advancement, and maternity leave, we're concerned about child care and sexual violence, pornography isn't an issue. I find *Late Hours in the Province*, where women are portrayed as carnally conscious with their lack of options, far more offensive and closer than *Prostitute*."

Declares Susie Bright, a not distant feminist sex guru who travels the country teaching college students how to analyze porn movies. "We were betrayed from within." On arrival at my San Francisco hotel room, Bright—sporting a masculine-

not blouse, no bra—pops the spanking video *Blow Me* in its flesh into the VCR. "He me, he my ass," provides a cheerful counterpoint to our conversation. "Ooh, my nice firm ass." Marching music for the revolution.

"I feel really let down by people wearing feminist attitudes I could have gotten from my Baptist grandmother, if I'd had one," Bright says. "What happened to the joyful 'yes' explanation of Our Father, Godfathers? When did that take-off your-top-and-unash-the-state feeling die?"

That feeling is being renewed—in somewhat more laissez-faire fashion—by women like punk-dick singer Lois Mallico of Washington, D.C. Mallico, whose twenty-year, a unified with the not girls, a much-bygone movement of young women involved with buds or business, originating in Olympia, Washington, that has a loose sort of "back off,

NAME

Susie Bright, 35, sex guru

ROOM

San Francisco

LAST BOOK WRITER

Susie Bright's Sexual Anarchy

LAST BOOK REVIEW

The Best American Erotica, 1990

ONE THING IN COMMON

"I feel really let down by people wearing feminist attitudes I could have gotten from my Baptist grandmother, if I'd had one."



plek") feelings toward men, vegetarianism (though most wear leather), and sexual freedom. In other words, they're reluctantly deciding so it no longer conceals the subordinated but he. In all other words, they're proving that being a true woman includes believing like a boy.

"The feminist scholarship of Andrea Dworkin and Catherine Mackinnon is so thick, so Alan Alda," says Mallico. "A lot of us just want to go spray-paint and make out with our boyfriends and not worry about oppression."

THE CHANGING TIMES are reflected in the sexual pilgrimage of Lois Mallico, a thirty-year-old from the Midwest who now calls the San Francisco-based magazine *Perverse Sex*. "When I was at the University of Minnesota in 1970 to 1974, where Catherine Mackinnon taught in the law school, I was a devoted follower of her and a real orgasmic feminist," Faludi says. Being paid for her hair up, wearing a my-fish-guy business suit, she looks like an energetic barter who somehow took a wrong turn into the city's Tenderloin district.

"But all along I felt something wasn't right," she continues. "I couldn't reconcile my bedroom experience—I really liked sex—with my politics. One day at my boyfriend's house I opened his closet to get a sweater and hundreds of hardcore-porn magazines were hanging out. I was disgusted, I said I would like to have them in a steaming bucket. He—a gay man, an apple pie, and a lovely, perceptive, psychodrama kisser—was shaking with humiliation. But a couple of days later he said, 'Just watch one video, and if you still feel the same way I'll get rid of them all.' We watched *Shogun Night*, and it sparked some honest dialogue—I told him my 'ick' sexual feminism, and we read more movies. The watershed event was when I was able to watch a movie—*Amateur Girls*—by myself and get so turned on I had to masturbate right away. Then I wanted to tell everyone how to use pornography—the gruesome Sally Field approach.

"Even though I got liberated, it's still very complicated," Faludi concludes. "I say to men, Okay, pretend you're a biologist and you're broken in here and you choose me down on the bed and make me suck your cock! And they're horrified—we got against all they've recently been taught. 'No, no, it would degrade you!' 'Totally Degrade me when I ask you to.' She smiles wryly.

"She left out why she enjoys being sexually degraded," says Faludi. "Her former partner, Catherine Mackinnon, about 40 percent of all women describe being sexually abused as children"—an controversial statistic from one study by Diana Russell. "The real abuse figure is probably higher. What a girl learns when she is sexually abused by a man is to please men and live for male approval, that when she is being violated she is being loved, that pleasure comes from being dominated.... What being sexually abused as a child teaches you, in short, is femininity."

Most women would scoff at Mackinnon's belief that femininity and erotic sexuality are even by-products of sexual abuse. But there is a reason that some women have kept their swords sharpened, the exact reason that Laura Roberts became an instant legend last June 15, when she cut off her husband John's penis and flung the offending sausage into a grassy field. Laura later told police that John had raped her and that, furthermore, "he always has an orgasm and doesn't want for me. It's awful."

While men everywhere weaned, a lot of women were gleefully transfused. As Germaine Greer noted in her 1970 book, *The Female Eunuch*, men have routinely given women feminist hysterectomy: "Her essential quality is controlled. She absolutely must be young, her body hairless, her flesh buoyant, and she must not have a small nose." (That brutal literary makeover continues in the current fashion craze for Kate Moss-like waifs.) Now the subversive group was suddenly revealed as a screaming mental. "Laura Roberts is a total lunatic," says punk singer Mallico. "She fought back and went straight to the police. I don't want anyone's dick in my face, either." (At last, unrepentant.)

And this is tough to swallow, because we know that men are snakes. Not you or me, of course, not our brothers or fathers or friends—but maybe, on second thought, some

NAME

Rene Denfeld, 26, writer

ROOM

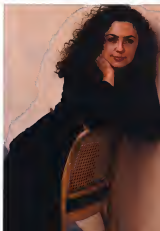
Portland, Oregon

FORGIVING WORD

The New Victims: Why Young Women Are Abandoning the Women's Movement

ONE THING

"I find *Late Hours in the Province*, where women are portrayed as carnally content with their lack of options, far more offensive and closer than *Prostitute*."



high school friends and that gay sex play events with and that hooking at work who sleeps his girlfriends after sex weeks. Those men fear women's power; they induce and deny it. Every year four million American women are physically assaulted by their male partners, somewhere between one in three and one in seven women will be sexually assaulted during her lifetime (her actual fraction is endlessly contended), and 50 percent of college men have pulled their Ms. they would rape if they could get away with it.

DO AS FEMINISM'S PROPOSERS are preaching mostly to a receptive neoconservative elite. After all, Joe College, even if he's not wearing rape fantasies, hardly requires instruction from Lisa Pilch as how to dominate women (Such lessons would, however, leave Joe with a sobered

sense that his women-based dominance was mostly a construct deriving from Lisa's powerful desire to subvert. This academic pique is kind of fun, once you get the hang of it.)

Do as feminism is fun, more as a rambunctious challenge to the prevailing feminism of the late twenty years. That feminist feminism was best expressed by Gloria Steinem's remark that "a woman without a man is like a house without a bicycle." First there was Susan Brownmiller's powerful 1975 book, *Against Our Will*. Men, Women, and Rape, which said that rape is "a conscious process of intimidation by which all men keep all women in a state of fear." And then thundered forth Dworkin and MacKinnon, twin prophets of sexual harassment.

Though both complain of frequent sexualizing misquotation after misquotation, neither Dworkin nor MacKinnon ever made the much-banded remark that "all sex is rape"; they actually argued the matter in case by case or in book terms more adopted by diverse feminists. Dworkin's assessment that "violence in the male, male is the person, violence in the person or the person" and "as an addition, the rape is not to buy a bottle of wine" slipped defibrillator paddles on the heart of the discourse, as did MacKinnon's suggestion that women who believe in their usual agency are actually denying the "unacceptable feminization" of having been "raped, pressured, coerced, blackmailed, or outright forced into sex."

Then Dworkin and MacKinnon's most lively writing, their co-authored book *Intercourse and Civil Rights* (1988), where the "pornography makes it impossible for [men] to tell when sex is forced, that women are human, and that rape is rape," and that "there is no viable pro-pornography feminism." This served worldwide neo feminists such as Marilyn Frye, who urges women to separate themselves from men entirely by "breaking up or avoiding close relationships or working relationships," and Charlotte Russek, who believes lesbians are the only true feminists.

For MacKinnon and Dworkin's vision, but also led deep into the mainstream, writing up in studies like the recent wide poll released last June in which 95 percent of eighth-through eleventh-grade girls said that their mother, 76 percent of boys the same age reported receiving unwanted sexual attention from their fellow students. The incidents ranged from boys flipping up girls' skirts and grabbing their breasts to fathers love love, but the main surge of what was once considered harassment pornography is now being called "gender violence."

It is hard to imagine that without MacKinnon and Dworkin's influence, Antioch College would have established a thirteen-page sexual consent policy and instructed students about the politically correct encounter. "If you want to take her blouse off, you have to ask. If you want to touch her breasts, you have to ask." (Note the assumption that men propose and women dispose.) Or that Ted Kennedy—believe it or not—would have sponsored an act last September to stop sexual predators in the bud. "We have kindergarten teachers," Kennedy said solemnly. "We're teaching our and identifying them in the earliest grades."

MacKinnon and Dworkin have been so influential partly because, like their socialist cousin, Karl Marx, they offer a penetrating analysis of power. But like Marx's, too, their influence seems airy or neoclassical, and they leave largely undressed the question of individual relationships—the level at which most people begin to ask, "What is to be done?"

For a long time, though, no one consistently reduced their view. And currently, when the counterblast began to get attention, it was thanks to a woman who eventually agreed with the MacKinnon/Dworkin view of sex, at least, violence, and her thought with male pornography.

"If you get raped, if you get beat up in a dark alley in a street, at a club," Camille Paglia passionately said. "That was part of the male's freedom." (Don't ask more would have it, what feminism has worked to eradicate.) The well-known professor at Philadelphia's University of the Arts wanted to media students—and now, perhaps, neoconservative—with the actual public performances occasioned by the 1993 publication of *Sexual Harassment: Art and Discourse* from Jeffrey A. Field. Dworkin. The book offered a lively challenge to one feminist view, particularly Simone de Beauvoir's hallowed assertion in 1949 that "woman is not destiny."

Feminism since then has been the ambivalence stemming from the fact that women can become warriors, Paglia says, now, summarizing the Paglia achievement with her crude male publisher's bragging: "It's not going to change anything but it's born in glass jars."

"Another thing missing from the feminist discourse until I came along is that girls go after guys, use them—that sex and power and aggression are faced on both sides. Girls, in fact, are always manipulating men. It's called cohesiveness."

"We always get the male view, which is that you are looking for sex, and if you're not, every moment you have to be clear that you are not a captivation. 'I'm saying, don't be like a prisoner—let me know how to behave like a prostitute.'"

Though Paglia positions herself as an iconoclast, many young feminists credit the gay and lesbian movement with clarifying that pleasure is political—and with first recognizing, in the shadow of AIDS, the political importance of boldly asserting a right to pleasure that may, in private life, be only cautiously earned. Do-as feminism can hardly be seen as a heterosexualization of a gay model of sex.

"The next men subscribe to the feminist rules the less attractive they are," Paglia says. "You must should go for the man's what women want. Women don't want to be with the stumpy man—'Can I take off your bow? The more dominant men who press it and turn the sex into a yes, the Rhetoric, they're the ones women will mate with.'"

That seems strangely true, credit earned without a second reading, like your pick. But should it be? Do-as feminism will force men to choose a reputation to newly dominant women. But men, unless their own unconcerned sex and upper-class strategy that give the Viagras and the condoms, a bad name—or they allow women to take the lead. Right now the debate is almost entirely of male voices, the latter option is carrying by default. Many enlightened men are still trapped in the hands over men and boys, some they adopted to block out radical feminism.

Other feminists now followed Paglia is speaking to that rule predicament. "Practically the danger in this lead of [rape cases] feminism is that it creates a downward spiral for men," says Kate Russek. "It makes men into obedient—desire brands, which are usually not consumed in one."

"Men are placed in a really awkward position," adds Pat Califia, the San Francisco-based writer of lesbian erotica. As an oral reluctance to talk in an era of the glossy-heterosexual-magazine pornography—namely, one—the women to her theme. "The problem isn't men and it isn't pornography, pornography doesn't lead to rape. It leads to masturbation," Califia says, feeling her pen strokes. She

wears a muscle shirt and a challenging haircut, but is relaxed and funny. "The problem is the situation can be fantasized on—the fact that you have to pay fifty dollars to get a blow job or find quarters to get to see a naked girl holds the idea that men are unlovable." She laughs, flexing her lady goddess of the serpent torso. "Not what you expect to hear from a dyke, was it?"

THERE'S A COMPLICATED STRAIN of well-who-would-you-be-the-guy-in-a-do-as feminism. Coming from a man, it would seem unlikely, however. To I take Catherine MacKinnon as a great lack? Califia also lovely. "No," MacKinnon is "a fierce progenitor of American Gothic" and Dworkin "her burning debauch, the pleasure," her dumpy demeanor, says Paglia. "That's a lot of clearly women in women's studies," says Chic professor Christine Hoff Sommers, who's working on a book titled *Why We Hate Women?* "Teaching those animals, attack animals is a way for them to compensate for various headaches—they're just mad at the beautiful girls."

With greater reason, Anne's Palisades says. "Most guys dream what Andrea Dworkin says because she's a fat, ugly dyke. But women will, too. They'll think, 'She's just saying this, so she couldn't have experienced the feelings and attitudes I've had.' How do you get out of this kind of judging women who say 'I'm not the center of the world'?" To be sure, well-spread academics are too simply pre-chasing their *psychoanalysis* at giving lead, suspicion of men remains a thick strand in the weave. As the anti-gay hand Bokus Kill sings, "We don't need you/Don't care about you/That sounds like radical feminism: the difference is that a riot girl might fuck you first, then tell you to fuck off."

Deuce and deuce shame and intermingled for the do-as feminists. Sex means less getting a puppy's sound, but then arrives a sticky blur demand that scribbles around chewing up little lips, dumping on the rug, and how to go at it.

In her story "A Romantic Weekend," Mary Gosselin writes, "Her desire to share herself had been completely frustrated. She had pulled him to the rug, certain that if only they could fuck, he would give her his extraordinary force and take complete control of her. Instead she had barely felt him, and what she had felt was remote and cold."

Some feminists criticize Gosselin and Susan Minor for their portrayal of "passive" and "undominant" women—women whose liberal sexual adventures they the first they are apparently succumbing to the retro legacy of relinquishing control. Susan Faludi, for instance, suggested that Gosselin's and Minor's "passionless" characters "came alive and took action only in seeking out male abuse."

"I don't see the criticism that my characters are trapped down by men," Gosselin responds. The thirty-eight-year-old author of *Red Behavior* and *The Girls Around* that goes about her Los Angeles, California, home with an aggressive study, wearing a pink head tied in the red and red cut-eye glasses. She has just told me a story about how when a man grabbed her to the back hair in the sex. And he apologized.

"I agree with a Village Voice review that said that my women are first outside but tough as pinned nails underneath and wanting to do all those provoked, heavy things, only the men are too stupid and clumsy to do it with them," she says. "I'm not condoning disrespect for women, but his pleasure of sexual violence is not something only men like."

NAME Rebecca Walker, 24, activist

WHERE
New York
LATEST ACCOMPLISHMENT
Founded the feminist group Third Floor
KEY QUOTE
"It's not easy at their average level of understanding, they do have a lot to fear."
ON THE FUTURE
"Feminism has had everyone's shoulders, right and in the ditch."



Due sexuality—which reaches a peak in Fu Califa's undercover fiction when a "bottom" is initiated by eight "topwomen" and a "ripc and commotion"—can be particularly fraught with anxiety. "The high incidence of women's rape victims is a result of guys over seeking one's own pleasure," suggests feminist photographer Cecilia Rappaport, whose own essays, like poetry or prose, even stress sex that is, perhaps accordingly, almost noble.

But sexual agency need not involve Sadomasochistic, and many are pursuing it in what might be called old-fashioned love. This choice often means a waning embrace of old-fashioned gender roles. "The fact is, so most and more women get liberated, they're having traditional weddings," says Christina Hoff Sommers. "The traditional male/female dynamic is enjoyable. We like doors opened for us and men's paid for on the first date—otherwise we think he's cheap."

THEIR EXPLOITATION OF WOMEN is the rule and not the exception. I come out of a very very different life than Nicole," Andrea Dworin says, comparing her friend Nicole Wolf's glide through Yale University and a Rhodes Scholarship to her own history as a battered wife and a rape survivor. "The first, grade men Nicole's met at cocktail parties are the same men I've met on the same corner bachelorette. For a lot of women, guys are taking to class and race better than from the land of things—rape, battery, incest, prostitution—that I'm talking about."

Though the number of women in the buffet zone is growing, it is still, in absolute terms, small. As Lois Mallico points out, "For every enlightened rice grill there are ten girls who are victims of the Spice House and ten girls who don't know about birth control."

Add Rebecca Walker, the twenty-four-year-old founder of the New York-based feminist activist group Third Wave and the daughter of activist Alice Walker. "You can have sexual agency if you have little experience to show, you're being beaten, and you don't have enough money to eat. Do me like incest, then, is chiefly the preserve of a white female elite."

"The black women who sit being sexual without choice, who throw down, is a 'No,'" says Olympia's ball hocks. "When is the black Sudan Bernhard or Black Madonna? When Tina Turner's sexuality is still ravaged with the image fix created of her."

Black men raise the question of the "grape batch," a figure recently coined by the hip-hopper A Tribe Called Quest, who noted that the women who so often change their "when we fuck the makers are screen out her name."

"The grape batch who throws down is creating a paradigm that allows her to have sexual pleasure but not sexual agency," says hooks. "Being fucked by someone who hates you may be exciting, but it isn't empowering."

A powerful emphasis of hooks's point, a point some people theorize prefer to ignore, is that women can't have full sexual freedom without male acknowledgment and respect. This is where doing feminism runs into the same well-trodden feminist trap been looking for the last twenty years. Across class and race lines, men still are a woman who "gives it" too easily as respect. "Right now," says Dr. Gail Ogden, author of the forthcoming *Women Who Love Sex*, "if you were around with a T-shirt that said 'I'm a woman who loves sex, you'd be taken as a slut, whom, say, target, or hit'."

MANY OF THE WOMEN I spoke with don't know where sexual agency will take them or men, but they do know that in the future feminism should stay out of the bedroom. "Feminism isn't the best system in its own thousand years of its time. Christian fundamentalism, because it's designed to deal with gender inequality," Fu Califa says. "Trying to use it to deal with sex is like trying to use it to deal with race." "Feminism," Rebecca Walker says with a laugh, "is just a tool that everyone should have in their toolbox, right next to the dildo."

For very different reasons, Andrea Dworin agrees. "If sexual liberation could change society, it would have done so in the time. When we talk about black men, we don't open the freedom to look at some other social problems. It's no different with women—I don't think they can be equal without that freedom, but economic equality is more important."

"So in a way," I suggest, "all your writing, which focuses on sexual inequality."

"Is a diversion," Dworin says. "But sexual and economic equality are deeply entangled. Somewhere near the top of the year list of male inequalities is the fact that women will cut off sex when they achieve economic parity because they won't have to (implicitly) trade physical access for the big house on Long Island. This worry stems from the underlying male fear that a lot of women don't really like sex just for itself."

Do we feminists need to assure men that that's not the case. But it also makes sex less of a right and more of a privilege. "If men stay at their average level of understanding," says Rebecca Walker, "they do have a lot to fear, because they're going to get left. Once we assert control we'll realize that they're not that important."

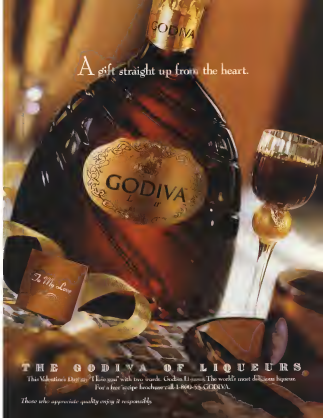
Nothing like a silly threat to make men come around—whooops! I mean, to make men discover that their most child-like looks like Andrew Dorn Clay. "If I were a man," Blake Wolf declares, "and I were expected to live her, sister her, and give her an orgasm, I would cling to every masculine prerogative I have." But though women on top in both bedroom and boardroom may threaten men, that's just too bad. Sexual affirmative action is already under way. "What's going to happen next," Wolf says, "is a big period of objectifying men's bodies."

Add hell hocks: "We can't just ask men to give up sexual obligation if we want a head shell and a right hand—and we do." For her part, Fu Califa believes that, after the revolution, there will be a plurality of pornography and diversity of fluid and playful experimentation with rules of dominance and submission.

Oddly enough, all these predictions seem to confirm Catherine MacKinnon's point. "My agenda is sexual equality," MacKinnon says. "It seems to be difficult for people to envision, the way things are—but that absence of existing difference looks a lot like freedom to me. The sexual agency people don't want equality they just want better orgasm."

It's even if sex will continue to be the same old sex, even the new rules women propose—and the looking anger by men—because men to indicate their passion. Perhaps the penis should be treated as the body's peace pipe, as the pen that signs the treaties. Because if men keep treating it as a seppie—or worse, a belly dish—it's going to end up in a grassy field somewhere, and men usually prefer the penis to be buried. Of course, the most haunting implication of the do-we-love-love message is that women do, too.

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The Future of American Womanhood

Has a Nose Ring, an Attitude, and Some Questions for a Dying Culture

By E. Jean Carroll

"OKAY, Suzanne, let's start by taking a look at you. What's that bracelet?"

"My black-leader spike bracelet."

"Then around your neck, Suzanne, you have—"

"That would be a boobytrap."

"And you have a—thing."

"That would be a nose ring."

"What color lipstick is that?"

"That would be obnoxious."

"Right. Now, what's that furred thing on the floor?"

"Oh, that's a bag I found in the trash today."

"What does your dad do?"

"He's a stockbroker."

"And how would you describe your family's house?"

"It's a big house. It's almost embarrassing to have a house with a pool."

"Will you show me your soccer?"

"Yes. It's really gross."



Suzanne at home, under the ancestral gaze of Mom, Dad, and great-great-great-great-great-great-grandmother Alvina.

PHOTOGRAPH BY HARRY BENSON

or at least what she wants to study, and there after, she can become a world-traveling bookie if she wants to. And that she can get work."

"Never in a million years!" Suzanne screams when I tell her "I don't want a job. I don't want money. Money is just the worst!"

"Do you don't want to get your job?" I ask her.

"I want, if I find something that I love to do, like carving, lacking eggshells, and I can get money for it, that's fine. There's no way I am gonna work in Taco Bell to have money to buy halibut. I'll get it in the garage."

"This is unbelievable. I say, 'Money, what kind of work are you gonna make?'"

"I'm not gonna get married, I don't drink," she says. "No way am I gonna sit in my little house in suburban and pretend that everything's all okay and watch my TV as they businessmen me to hell."

She sees herself either "owning a glamorous punk rock coffeehouse in Chicago with Michael's Mom"—remember her that name—or working in a shelter for the homeless. "We best not down for seventeen unorthodox years. I founded one on the ground. My plan is to rid myself of everything except for when I need to a big pack and novel across Europe!"

So, QUINCY, while we've got her, lets catalogue the life of Suzanne in overview. Because no matter where she goes or who she becomes, there will always be this young, vibrant, laissez-faire girl made her.

KNOWLEDGE MOVIE BREAKFAST AT TIFFANY'S
FOOD PIZZA
AUTHOR TOM ROBBINS, THOMAS Pynchon, LEONARD
COMEDY, ENMA GOLDMAN
ROBBINS, BEUCHING T-HITS, BEOBACING FURNITURE,
WHITING BOOKS (LAST
BOOK NINETEEN SIXTY'S PUNK
IT ALL OF IT BRIGHT)
OUTFIT: PATENT-LEATHER
SEBBI AND FISHNETS
ACTRESS: AUSTIN REFRAN
ACTUAL: DOESN'T HAVE ONE

"Oh, come on," I say. "I don't have a favorite actor?"
 "Tom Cruise?"
 "Oh, no?"
 "Mam Dillan?"
 She rolls her eyes.
 "I'll had to pick anyone."

"Kevin Costner?"

Right now, my favorite actor is a movie would be Tim Curry in *The Holy Horseman* (Pace 2001).

"Tim Curry?"

Suzanne's favorite place: Mildred's Restaurant, where she and her best friend Amy sit in the big painted chairs in back every day under the ceiling fan, not to the "local art." Then they discuss movies and books and try to think of new things to do.

Like going to the smallest town nearby and, like, observing people," says Suzanne.

Usually, though, they end up just sitting, drinking coffee, working cigarettes, writing in their journals, and talking about the universe.

"These who are mutants are the ones that look for them," says Suzanne.

"Tom Robbins," says Amy.

Amy shows her eyebrows and has down in two days my black lines that flip up in the end. She is wearing a beautifully black black-her hair with a black net that spirals around her pretty face.

"What's your favorite fantasy?" I ask them.

Suzanne is wearing her *BLUET* OR *NOT*? T-shirt. It has a little hole that shows her new charcoal chignon hair.

"I don't go around and fantasize very much," she says.

"You don't fantasize about the perfect man?" I ask.

They just stare at me.

After several hours at Mildred's, during which time Suzanne and Amy have drunk enough black coffee to strike blind dead, they decide to be Sue Stern, a spin of six body blocks between the capital building and the University of Wisconsin campus. Starting at the north end of the street, Suzanne starts at an white car. "I can be to be

late for a lot of things—very cute, very classic, shoulder tilted back, with my army surplus gas mask bag hanging up and down against her nump, which resembles a balloon.

Yes, this is what it's all about, to be someone, looking along the street along on a Thursday night, in the chaotic-making capital. Suzanne speaks and laughs with everyone she sees, the most focused up-looking the better. Indeed, her face grows unusually random with the homeless claps upon whom she shows a flood of cigarettes, all of her spine change, and a special cigarette-rendering-on-prog even for Suzanne, whose heart is always in a terrible profile.

"I love making people feel like they do, who feel like everyone hates them, I love making them feel like someone cares," she says.

Just past Urban Outfitters, at the fountain of Cascade Park, where the awfully clear brightly, Suzanne pulls off Amy's video hat. Amy remains by pushing Suzanne into traffic. Suzanne, in turn, chases Amy up the steps, and screaming, they both leap off the top tier onto the fountain, sending waves in all directions. They splash out so much water, neither's face is the same. Then Suzanne lies on the wet ledge with one arm behind her head and lights a cigarette. Perfectly bedraggled, she resembles a wild, nervous in today's copy.

Soon she is shouting, so there's nothing to do but jump up and run down the street in her wet. Then and... you can imagine the rest, with water spouting out of her combi boots with every step, her hanging in her thighs like plinkins, now just twirling with tiny beads of water. She reaches the university campus, where she both herself into the fountain, then again whoops it up like a dummy. And after that splash, she heads down to the storm-sailed slaves.

The rockiest girl at West High, entering the hovers of homelessness.



of Laia Mendoza, and the dove of the student union dock. Had she then climbed out, dived across the stairs and shown herself into Laia Mendoza, I wouldn't have been surprised.

She has enough grace to dive into the unknown, if only she could reach it. And she hasn't even bothered to remove her combi boots.

I AM ASSUMING if the well-damp everything out of her pants and allow her to catalogue the contents "Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

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"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"Cool," she replies.

"That is my weekend-library book, and the best of the books I'm going to get next," she says.

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

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"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"Let's see."

"How here are the rules. Everybody writes down a secret desire on a piece of paper. We fold them and put them in the middle of the table. Then I read them about one at a time, and we vote on whose they are. The player who feels the most people vote."

"I don't have a secret desire," Suzanne says.

"Well, look at Michael's Mom. He's got one desire after another. Look at that boy, wow."

Suzanne does not need to be told to look at Michael's Mom. He is a handsome specimen—no more, 145 pounds, nineteen years old, a real through his eyebrows, a pair through his nostrils, a hoop-and-bell through his nostrils, a big gold earring, and a single daffodil-colored Michael's Mom. And a black-leather jacket that says *LOVE A DOWNTOWN*, still, a *COY* across the back. And, as if he could possibly be more handsome, certain unmissable difficulties with the criminal-justice system that make his continued presence in Madison and Suzanne's life difficult.

"I can't think of one myself," Suzanne says.

"We can't do that hard to compare up,"

Man says softly.

They both smile. She is radiating a brightness I have seen on her face only three or four times a day.

"The being 'home,'"

Man says, "I have a desire."

Suzanne begins to scribble.

"Now," I say, "put them all in the middle of the table. No peeking. Really! Let me read this out loud. 'To fuck on Freya's island.'"

"I wonder where that could?" Amy says.

Suzanne lets out her high-pitched, rising, very nervous, funny little laugh.

At 6:30 the next morning, Suzanne and Michael's Mom are still awake, whispering in her seat. All day, day back to town, Suzanne sings her new favorite song "I Am Woman."

Next day Michael's Mom shows me what Suzanne wrote in her notebook. "Man, you is

All the way back to town in the car, Suzanne sings her new favorite song, "I Am Woman."

The preternaturally knowing face of the twenty-first century: Suzanne, with Gabe.



33. Which would you want from a man you just met?

Respect	82.3
Friendship	38.3
Love	73.4
Money	4.7

34. How much older than you is too old for a potential lover?

Average years	15.09
---------------	-------

35. How much younger than you is too young for a potential lover?

Average years	4.89
---------------	------

36. Who would be better in bed?



Tiger Woods	84.4
Victoria Beckham	39.4

37. Who would be better in bed?

Al Green	47.4
Bill Clinton	39.6

38. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being lowest, 10 being highest), rate the following women as role models. (Average ratings)

Conan O'Brien	6.83
Barb Diller Goldberg	4.45
Elizabeth Dole	6.64
Cockie Baskins	3.64
Romance Arnold	4.87
Sandra Bernhard	4.24
Marilyn Maguire	3.25

39. On a scale of 1 to 10, rate the following men as role models:



Bill Clinton	8.87
William J. Bennett	6.43
Howard Stern	5.86
Donald Trump	6.73



Sean Penn	8.60
Don Henley	4.88
Howard Stern	4.34
Tracy Morgan	3.87

40. Who would be easier to meet?

Disco Sweeney	63.9
Disco Chaz	34.9
Disco Dave	1.00
Disco Dave	1.00
Disco Dave	1.00

41. Would you rather be thought of as?

Disco Dave	73.7
Disco Dave	23.9

42. Which male image is most appealing to you?

An environment banker in an Armani suit	35.9
A member with a three-day growth	35.8
An undrafted	14.1
A groupie member with no underwear	13.1
A motorcycle enthusiast in a torn denim shirt	9.7
A male model in a tuxedo	9.0
A magazine editor in a tuxedo jacket	6.1

43. When a friend offers to let you spend a night alone, which question do you ask first?

Is he hot?	57.2
What does he do?	39.3
Why don't you want him?	7.4
Is he fat?	6.5
Does he have money?	5.4
When did he go to school?	4.3
Is he smart?	2.2
Is he bald?	2.1

44. On a dinner date, which of the following do you expect a man to do?

Pay for dinner	51.2
Hold open doors	35.6
Push in your chair	16.1
Order for you	5.7
All of the above	13.6
None of the above	10.9

45. Should men close up their language when women are present?

Yes	51.2
No	47.3

46. If you had to choose one, which would you rather be?

Man	40.9
Woman	29.7
Neither	29.6

47. Would you be more upset if your husband became:

Blind	31.4
Impotent	46.9

48. Who is hotter?



Al Green	47.4
Bill Clinton	39.6

49. Who is a better role model for young women?

Her mother	49.5
Her	49.0

50. Are you more sophisticated sexually than your father?

Yes	35.7
No	64.3

51. What percent of your household income do you expect to earn?

Average	49.31
---------	-------

52. When would you rather lose it?

A woman	40.9
A man	53.3

53. When would you rather lose it in a bet?

A woman	42.4
A man	57.6

54. If you could have said it, what would your virginity have been worth?



Madonna	52.45
No answer	47.55

55. Would you rather be arrested for:

Treason	47.5
Prostitution	29.4

56. "The status of women has gone down in the past decade."

Agree	10.5
Disagree	89.5

57. If you could have just one child, would you pick:

A daughter	53.9
A son	41.6

58. "All men are after one thing."

Agree	32.2
Disagree	67.8

59. Would you rather your son know how to:

Share his feelings	50.9
Make money	34.7
Play football	10.3
Change a diaper	5.1

60. Would you rather spend a weekend:



Madonna	34.6
Jacko Frost	17.7
Neither	47.7
Both	1.0

61. Which character on Seinfeld would you rather have sex with?

Jerry	61.8
Kramer	17.5
George	9.5
Elaine	1.2

62. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being "not at all" and 10 being "extremely"), how easy is the

63. Lactation is:

An acceptable choice	59.3
Too weird	29.1
Cool	10.5

64. Have you ever pressured a man into having sex?

Yes	39.2
No	60.8

65. If you had to choose, which would you pick?

Hugging but not sex	40.9
Sex but no hugging	51.0

66. "In sexual relations, no always means no."

Agree	45.2
Disagree	54.8

67. Have you ever taken an orgasm?

Yes	52.0
No	48.0

68. When would you rather die?



Mark Wahlberg	52.3
George Clooney	47.7

69. Would you rather be with a man who says he:

Is a virgin but isn't	59.1
-----------------------	------

70. Would you rather be with a man who says he:

Is a virgin but isn't	59.1
-----------------------	------

71. On a scale of 1 to 10, how easy is the idea of watching two women having sex?

Very easy	3.53
-----------	------

72. On a scale of 1 to 10, how easy is the idea of watching two men having sex?

Very easy	2.27
-----------	------

73. If you are a heterosexual, have you ever had a lesbian experience?

Yes	30.8
No	69.2

74. On a scale of 1 to 10 (1 being "not at all" and 10 being "extremely"), how easy is the

What This Poll Proves About Women (And About Men)

By Ellen Goodman

WHEN THE MEN of *Esquire* were asked to rank the 10 most beautiful women between the ages of 18 and 29, they pulled up some dubious little hotties. They also looked some attitudes that give us hints about the state of female life. If not feminism, is Generation X and Generation Y?

These pragmatic women want money and status and have figured out that they'll have more success working for it than marrying it. Or sleeping with it, for that matter. The Clintonoids, again, have gone belly-up. This generation would rather be a workaholic wife like Hillary Clinton than a spinster like the wife who stays for the shipper. They'd rather have a Pulitzer Prize than Miss America's crown. And if they admire Madonna, it's Madonna the CEO more than Madonna the sex symbol. These women have absorbed all the messages of feminism but not the message: A great strongly respect our stereotypes, expect to earn half the family

income, would rather work for women and want men to think they're better at their careers than at child-rearing. But they don't want to be called feminists.

Could this be because most of them would want men to pay for dinner and would not let her get a gift of sex underwear than a book? There's more than a bit of nihilism, confusion, and time lag around sex roles in work and real life. Just let us not forget that half of the women would rather be dead than fat.

On the other hand, maybe they reject feminism because they'd rather be a bitch than a bitch. For the women's rights movement, X and Y are not about sex, but about sex, you can go to the spa after the march.

Men who read this poll will go on wondering: What do women want? Well, we have some mixed messages here, guys. Women want a first date with someone who's cute (like, say, Marky Mark). But they'd rather their husbands were smart (like, say, Madison). And they'd rather their wives know how to share their feelings than make money. There is the mix: who wants the cash, who wants the love, who wants the sex. Women may prefer a man who's strong and sexy over one who's in touch with his inner child—do I hear the new-age husband, mister, maybe?—but can't we have a guy who's strong but not alien?

These women are sure of what they want from sex. They don't want war. They don't have penis envy. But so often men do, as given the ridiculous chasm between sex without love and love without sex. We'll take love, income—surprise!—as a career without bugs may be *Esquire's* idea of sex, but it isn't ours.

63. On a scale of 1 to 10, how easy is the idea of watching two women having sex?

Very easy	3.53
-----------	------

64. On a scale of 1 to 10, how easy is the idea of watching two men having sex?

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Is a virgin but isn't	59.1
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70. Would you rather be with a man who says he:

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-----------------------	------

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No	69.2

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Drew Barrymore is:

- (a) A dishy pinup
- (b) A gritty, neorealist thespian
- (c) A paradigm of the postfeminist celebrity
- (d) Cooler than Madonna

Discuss among yourselves

NOW, KNOW THE TOP? (a) *A dishy pinup.* We know this from the photo at left and innumerable poses for a certain youth company in which she is sprayed, smeared and tattooed. Note the tuck-tuck of the upper lip, which pinups up at a near-90-degree angle, that glowing a visitor at her home atop Mulholland Drive, she seems almost happy, a very cool, sexy subscriber "And this," she says, glancing over a three-step drop and landing lightly on her made Adidas (can't you touch), "is my living room" (shabby-chic knockoff couches, Early American table and cubies, wicker candle—see, like the energy). It's a girlish gesture. Girls, too, in her pride at what she and her "very best girlfriends" (now that she broke up with her fiancé, she seems to know no boys) have done to the garage: turned floor, walls, ceiling, into a carnival of paint, graffiti, and psychedelic self-expression (Wicker Park Cocaine).

The next day in the photo studio, in stockings, high heels, and push-up bra, she beams over, one breast flopping out, and says, "This is a little different from yesterday, don't you think?" She's still only 25 years.

(b) *A gritty, neorealist thespian.* Unlike some trendy youthquake oddballs, Drew can sit. Always, reclining in *Quincy*, *Severely Compromised* and some could stay in *Thelma & Louise*. And *The Avery Fisher Story*, which was a bit too easy. Next month, she got kidnapped and tortured and then wreaks revenge in *Red Girl*, a mouthed lip-synch western that even odds will show Drew to major advantage. Which leads us to

(c) *A paradigm of the postfeminist celebrity.* We all know about the huge adjectives to drugs and alcohol, the painful imbalances, and the spiritual renewal. Unlike River Phoenix, Drew is alive, but also unlike the innumerable others who have suffered and triumphed, she has avoided the red-hot-step preachiness of the martyr's found. Solid and purified in life, she will delight in playing with darty-girlisms for the camera. "You don't understand," she says. "I had to do *Avery Fisher*" (After all, woman's sad lament: "We're trying to clean up her image, but..."). She could have proved her good values in a movie-of-the-week, Valerie Bertinelli-as-a-troubled-man-in-Sheriff Vane man, but to her credit, she has no desire to

Not to say Drew is not spiritual. There was a moment during the two-month Red Girl shoot, in the middle of nowhere in Texas, when she jumped into her car and drove and the sea was setting and nothing else was around and she felt there a, the moment of when when all things become clear. What those things were, she wouldn't say, but that's how you build mystique.

(d) *Cooler than Madonna.* At this point, who isn't?

—M H



Jumps! with
Alec Baldwin and
his skydiving instructor,
twelve thousand
feet above the Sea
Andrea Pirelli.

Alec Baldwin Hangs Tough

Hollywood doesn't understand him. The media won't leave him alone. And Kim's got her own problems. It's enough to make a guy jump out of a plane.

By Ivan Seletiaroff

SIX DAYS before his marriage to Kim Basinger, Alec Baldwin is bodysurfing in the Atlantic below the East Hampton mansion where the ceremony will be held. It's high tide, a rough, almost Homeric sea, dark and full of strong currents. Stepping in, I promise myself I won't ride a single wave. "I wonder if Kim'll still marry me if I'm in a wheelchair," Baldwin yells, tugging to catch an ugly five-footer. It snags hard, on feet from where the beach rises with a crust of pebbles, but he's on the crest and takes it all the way in. When he comes back, he starts telling me about some friend of a friend down the shore who had his neck broken in waves like that two weeks ago. Then he rides off on the next one. "That one missed by a foot," he says. "I'm going to surf the next."

The tide keeps moving in, but for half an hour Baldwin rides one last wave after another. I finally follow him in on a relatively minor look

ing breaker, get things list on my chest, then scowled about the pebbles. Waking up on my knees a few feet away I show my chest, a male bonding badge of honor, and get up nothing but an "I can't believe you're serious. Look. 'Be careful,' he says, heading out for one more. 'It's a long life.'"

THE LAST FEW YEARS have been long for Alex Baldwin. He hates to talk about it, but it's clear the moment we meet, over cold coffee at a downtown restaurant in midtown Manhattan, the mirror look in his eyes, the two-week beard streaked with gray, the impeccably dressed white shirt, khakis, and navy jacket of a man who's been taken to the cleaners. On the right, the hand of his tanned left hand is a gold wedding band, a prop from the soon-to-be-released remake of *The Godfather*. His eyes look like the Dead Sea: gray-blue and eerily still. His voice is soft, gritty, unmodulated—the result (as in fact in family legend) of swallowing a dial-a-girl when he was two, the chosen boy would presumably have common eyes in contact, as though smirking you to some preliminary decision on the predicate of his sentence. It makes the conversation seem very dissonant, though in practice it's more a benevolent detachment. His images and metaphors live at momentous personal drama.

By the time the film arrives I have the strange sensation I'm sitting with the hero of a Greek tragedy, upland to star in the movie, aware the development, run for the Greeks, all the while struggling with the fact, fine and answering to a chorus of voices just offstage. The moment into the conversation, he's talking about fathers.

"I thank every man inside there. Particularly in this business. I don't know how many times that last year I've been on the phone with 'he goes off the record to his half dozen movie stars, all huge names in their kitchen—'trying to figure out how to go through it all.' I'm meaning he drove out to a shoot in New Jersey largely to ask one of the most venerable legends in a generation of Hollywood stars. 'How do you deal with someone when I'm still making up my butt for opinions of the last telephone pole he showed up there?'"

"It is really that tough?"

"Oh, yeah," he says, ordering the first of three cappuccinos. "Today's been a good day, but I'm thinking, all I want to go to home today, take a hot bath, and just sit at school, get out when I feel, standing, and just sit when the day brings. I feel like that some in Rome, huh? The fact comes with pain and pride as it goes into a perfect De Niro voice. 'You don't love me, Steve Ray. That's how I feel about some of the people in my industry.'"

"What makes that so difficult to deal with?"

"I think it's a confluence of three things. There's a lot more pressure to be made on Wall Street. If you want real power, go to Washington. If you want sex, go into the film or business. But if you want the whole person exposed in one place, stand up with the worst side of life, we're doing something, come go to Hollywood."

"It's like I'm in Raging Bull: 'You didn't knock me down, Sugar Ray.' That's how I feel about some people in my field."



Lulu. He picked his films as much as any actor can—less for the size of the part than for the quality of the script and the people involved. Tim Burton (*Beetlejuice*), Mike Nichols (*Working Girl*), Jonathan Demme (*Married to the Mob*), Eric Bogosian and Oliver Stone (*Talk Radio*), Woody Allen (*Alien*). Though he had most of the goods then half the actors he supported, he buried himself in the five-to-thirteen-minute roles, and his capacity for simulation was considerable. One day you were looking for Alex Baldwin in each of these movies, it was almost impossible to know in each film.

By 1986 Hollywood wanted him to be "the next Kevin Costner." When he returned to L.A. to star in *Jack Ryan* in the Hunt for Red October, there was a house warming in the Hollywood Hills, early billing with Steve Cooney, a supporting role of looking into a vehicle destined for megastars (the Tim Chapin book had sold five million copies), and a credits, Paramount, in all four behind him. It was probably the least compelling reason he gave, but the movie grossed nine million, two sequels were in the works, and there was no turning back. After starring in the Jonathan Demme-produced *Blown Away*, he was back in Hollywood—Demme this time—for the Neil Simon comedy *The Meyerowitz*. He fell in love with his costar, Kim Basinger, started shooting, and then everything came apart.

"Suddenly, it's like I'm in the *Blind of De Mores*," says Alex, who seems to have a film reference for every moment of his life. Feeding between the stars and Demme—over

money, script, key personnel, even locations—began instantly and accelerated as the shoot went a month over schedule and at million over budget. "The film would flop was a foregone conclusion, and fingers had to be pinched. I'd gotten stuck into a PK nightmare: financing credits actors quoting 'media sources' about alleged on-set tantrums. Alex's allocation of cellular phones, under-wills, and director's chairs, Basinger's demands for daily fitness sessions, her telling Neil Simon, 'Whoever wrote this movie doesn't understand comedy' even her lack of underwear under costumes. Alex responded with chosen apoplexy, not only for those involved (Demme studio head Jeffrey Katzenberg was 'the eighth decade—Grandy,' Neil Simon was 'deep as a hole's cap') but for every suit in Hollywood "the worst type of remarks," he called them, "businessmen" debilitated into believing that they are businessmen."

Though he remained an Allen waiter (he had a track record of being easy to work with, and even the most nervous stories tended to improve the problems to Basinger), a perky complex of suits set in. Or as Alex now puts it: "I sat myself back high-ups in the purchase of Hollywood park." He stopped going anywhere, but the media's character assassination continued, over everything from weight fluctuations to a zoning agency squabble with a neighbor (his suit began to feel like marbled, and Alex, who were pronounced worried or worried up with Harrison Ford. Though his agent at the time, J. Michael Rosen, negotiated a two million dollar for the Hunt against a change of lease at Paramount in the summer of 1987 delayed production of the film, Steven Glass. Forced to decide between that and Basinger on Broadway, Alex came back to New York. Through months of repeated shakings and so-called no, he worked on the development of a script for *The Hustler*, only to watch a gross nearly seven million last year without him. But his work got stronger. He said his last scene in last year's adaptation of Gregory Gills Run (from Alan Ayckbourn, Ed Harris, and Jack Lemmon) was exempted from his own hand-drawn reviews for the film remake of *Private vs. Kin* and last film's *Mother*. Other than *The Godfather*, however, the roles he wanted should him.

It got uglier last winter, when Basinger lost a landmark \$7 million lawsuit stemming from a dispute over whether her verbal agreement to star in the film *Young Henry* constituted a contract (Basinger had walked out days before filming was to begin). "The trial, Alex says, "was this worst possible agency for a man like me. It was something happen to the woman I love, and there's no one thing I can do about it." By the time filming began on *The Godfather*, in which he co-stars with Basinger, the two were checking into hotels at Paul and Rochelle Isaacson, the Julian and Ethel Rosenberg-based characters in E. L. Doctorow's *The Book of Daniel* and Baldwin felt as if he were discomfiting from a nightmare.

"It's hard to describe exactly," he says. "Things happen in life that are tough, then they get tougher. And the next thing you know, it's much worse. What happens at this point is, you're not thinking anymore, just emerging. Can I afford to rest in this guy the way I want to? How will he react to my success after me, on a dysmorphological level? You feel like you're carrying a bomb of another couple, and you can react to only five per cent per year if you make it, see, you are the movie, and then you are given an ankle certificate. You have to deliberate passion from someone."

"In any mind—I don't think I reacted to—but in any mind I did cross that line. Every morning the same. Put on the suit, put on the game face, go right by participation. I remember this tremendous summer. I woke up with the same spasm going through my mind. I could have taken the my mind, but so I fought the good fight. It had just gotten so repetitive, so self-judging, so unending, so."

"Chances?"

"Chances? That's the word. Finally, I wrote up that morning and realized who I had become. Richard Nixon. Of the Checkers speech. Uh-oh. Time to step back and reconsider."

IT'S THE TOP OF THE EIGHTH in an unbearably fashionable Astoria and Wilson softball game in East Hampton. The humidity and temperature have in the low nineties, the last bottle of 1986 St. Charles has been spilled off, every conceivable suit, business card, and celebrity has been moist, proffered, or spotted, and the Astoria are down by five runs. Alex is on third, looking hounded by the fans. On a shallow fly to left field, the third base coach tells him to tag up, which is madness.

A perfect strike from left goes into catcher Jay McInerney's glove when Baldwin's half-way home, and he starts thinking about getting into a rundown, about how low he'd wanted to split after the sixth inning, about his odds of knocking McInerney out if he loses his shoulder. Fullback-style, and steps it up into McInerney's glove at the last moment.

Suddenly he remembers left field in Little League in Mississippi, New York, leaning a long ball crack of the bat, the soft thud of the ball, linking over him, from people screaming. "What the hell you doing? Get the fucking ball, Alex!" He kept studying the workman raising bases past beyond the left-field fence, thinking among thoughts about. He'd hit the ground for out. Don't wonder where he made a swing now? They were still screaming after the play, and his mother, who had just learned her son had scored in the top personnel of an 11-year, wouldn't hear it. "He was screaming. Don't yell in his face. He's a genius."

McInerney is squared off in front of the plate, not a big man by any means, and as Alex picks up speed, all he can think about is how much he wants to lose. Lowering his shoulder, he barrels in, then changes his mind about swiping up and simply collides, hard enough to knock McInerney flat on his back, but with the ball still in the glove. Rally over. In the cloud of dust over home plate, Alex is laughing hysterically.



McQueen for a day: Baldwin in the remake of *The Godfather*. He's Steve McQueen to Kim Basinger's Ali McQueen.

The Highbrow Smut of Nicholson Baker

His succès de scandale, *Vox*, was a tribute to the joys of dial-a-porn. With his new book, *The Fermata*, the brainy, lust-sodden novelist explores the ultimate adolescent male fantasy: to be able to stop time and undress women with impunity.

By Lynn Darling

SOME THINGS WE KNOW about Nicholson Baker from reading his books:

- He stays awake at night writing imaginary acceptance speeches for the National Book Award
- He has passion of the penis
- He once made his readers cry by discussing her place-mat of a woman

Something else we know about Nicholson Baker:

- The fact is, I think I can truthfully say that I am a nice guy. I'm a good husband, and I live quite a normal life.
- In other words, he's no Arno Strize.
- Some things we know about Arno Strize:
- He can stop time
- He uses that ability to undress and try with women in all sorts of public places without their knowledge
- He doesn't lose any sleep over this

Arno Strize is the unashamed protagonist of Nicholson Baker's new novel, *The Fermata*. Baker says that he is a dreading publication. Maybe he is, and maybe he should be. The man is about to throw a hand grenade over the barricades of the gender war.

In *The Fermata* Baker has written a book that describes precisely the actual and moral landscape of an adolescent male. The truly scary thing is that he would have to believe that this creature lives on in most men long after the hormones have loosened their choke hold on the male brain.

This is an interesting moment in which to be publishing

such a book. On some college campuses now a man who makes a list can be charged with grand larceny. A penis has suspiciously abandoned in an empty lot, separated from its owner by an angry wife. These are women out there who reject a stranger's "fing baby" with ripe. You don't need a weatherman to know which way the wind is blowing; you need a good lawyer and at least five witnesses.

And it is an interesting moment in Nicholson Baker's career, as well. He is thirty-seven and the author of four other books. The first two, *The Memory Police* and *Some Impossibilities*, were novels, and the third, *U and I*, was a work of nonfiction, but all three were small, autobiographical works in which a talented young stylist, working in the first person on a miniature canvas, demonstrated his ability to take the most mundane subjects of a mundane world, like shoelaces and washing machines, and polish them into a poetry of Wodehouse perfection.

And then, two years ago, came *Vox*.

Like the others, *Vox* was a slim, astoundingly unobtrusive book that depended for its charm on Baker's extraordinary descriptive talents. Unlike the first three, however, *Vox* was also a dirty book. It was an account of a surreal telephone conversation between Jim and Abby, a man and a woman whose mutual purpose in talking to each other was to achieve orgasm in the privacy of their respective homes, three thousand miles apart.

Wink of time: Will Baker get charged by feminists?



We was transported by Folio's publisher, Random House, as "the breakthrough novel of our time" and given a first printing of thirty-five thousand copies. One reviewer called the galleys a plain brown wrapper. It was published, in a panoply of copies, as *William's Day*, bound in my own book number, through which a prospective reader could hence to a breathy voice deliver a list of the pleasures within its pages, and flow into the best seller list. *William's Day* the book critic Jonathan Yardley denounced. We as "a book utterly without merit either as literature or as entertainment" and "a creature of type, pure and simple."

By the time the fires had died down, Nicholson Baker was left with the sort of Julekyl-and-Hyde literary reputation that had bedeviled other contemporary maladaptive writers, such as John Irving and Jay McInerney, before him. Was he a unique and rising voice of American literature, or just another favored Bloom who had turned up his talent in a way that could only get him the wrong sort of attention from the wrong sort of people?

Now five years later on Nicholson Baker's second act, it could have left well enough alone, of course. He could have written a granite-like book that set him back up, since the more high-minded writers of literary academia. Philip Roth, after all, *Edged Into America* Complete with the annotation On George Bernard Shaw has written a book that makes the book like Adorno's letters to Hobsbawm, and the question is, Why?

I just felt, having written this, that there were other more uncomfortable things that were also true about the way that one thought about one that the kids hadn't captured," he says. "I just felt that I'd left things out that were equally more uncomfortable."

So Likert's protagonist steps into an under-land world and was shocked over their public hair. He presides there home and hides himself so he can watch them while they dance, hush, and, recently, masturbate. Once, he forces a woman in nail-on-arms so he can come on her closed, teardrop eyes. Another one he slips a small vibrator into a woman's underpants while she rides the subway. He does all of these things without their permission. But he does not have intercourse with them. That, he says, would be worse.

"Wah! I did try to write reviews of the book that were less snarky," Baker says. "But since the idea started for me with the fourth-grade farce of taking my teacher's clothes off I thought I should stay close to that. What I did was to make her a grown-up, you know, and that's where it began: authorship. He's doing something that's wrong, that's an interesting kind of wrong, and I wanted to pose a number of questions. Are there degrees of villainy? Is it worse because he's smarter and should know better, or is it a little more okay? I just wanted to have written a book that poses thoughtful on this topic, because it's very tricky. I mean, men really have almost kinds of tapes and things. I think. We might as well fit the truth about it. And see what happens. I guess I wanted to write a book that says, 'Excuse me, I'm sorry.'"

The sensual landscape of *The Immortal* is a wondrously accurate poetry and disturbing one. Arno is a thirty-five-year-old white gay without any roots in history or family or career, as an office temp (as Baker himself once was), he yearns for women who have more money and power and better jobs than he does. Arno is intimidated by them, he can't even ask a woman out on a date without first taking her clothes off to see women naked without their knowledge levels the playing field for Arno.

Just as in *Men*, there isn't a whole lot of old-fashioned courtship going on in *The Diviners*—Baker's women tend to find more pleasure in showers and vibrations and delivery trucks than they do in men, who are generous and expeditious. But while in *Men* there is something reaching about Jim and Abby's clumsy attempts to connect, even over a telephone wire, something endearing in their effort to talk themselves into an intimacy they can't find elsewhere, *The Diviners* is potentially more frustrating in what it has to say to women.

Arco's hapless charm is meant to disarm, but his claim that he admires women and doesn't want to humiliate them isn't convincing. *The Female* explores a fantasy that puts women right where women have always thought men wanted them at the first place—power, money, and sex in control of what is happening to them. It is a book that will make many women angry and it is a book that serves out of character with the bouzouki humanity of Nicholson Baker's other work.

He is having a difficult time calculating the distance he wants to put between himself and Arco Strype.

"The idea that a writer's life isn't what you see in the novel—in the past, I've always said that's just a load of crap. Of course the writer is worrying about himself," Baker says. "I used to be very easy for me to be reflexively anti-Nabokov on that Apollonian thing of his spring. Of course, Nabokov's Hamlet has nothing to do with me." Oh, come on, come on! I can't write that many hundreds of pages with that intense interest in a twelve-year-old kid without having felt those neuroses. Of course you're interested in young girls. But having written *The Invader*, where those things go on that I maybe don't want to be associated with, I'm probably going to sound more like that—you know. There's my life and there's you are, and those things are quite different."

It is hard to know how sincere his concern is. Baltes, after all, is something of an expert in what he has termed "the self-scravenging of self-eficacy." In the first two novels, *The Idiot* and *From Innocence* and in *David Copperfield*, Baltes's characterizations on education, time, literary apprenticeship, and, of course, youth, often seem personally therapeutic, rather than objectively critical. He is, of course, a novelist, and the things he will tell us about himself. In all three books, Baltes made art out of youth, out of the comparative contemporary need to confess. And to be forgiven and even admired for what is confessed. Now comes *Anna Birken*, who also wants to be forgiven. But for the reader who comes to the *Fremosa* without prior knowledge of Baltes's covert desire to be loved for his vulnerability he makes himself, this may not be an easy job to do.

BAKER IS SITTING at the penultimate, Quaker quest of the living room of his home in Berkeley, California. It is a quiet draft appropriate to a street where the students cultivate rhododendrons and dandelion stems with the same senseless attention. His wife, Margaree, is expecting their second child, a son, any moment; and that fact, too, thickens the air with expectation, like the ridges of an unborn chick.

He has a richly resonating quality to his voice. It's the sort of voice a therapist might use in discussing the late, transcendent enthusiasm by the family. Lohndorff it's hard to tell how seriously he's taking all this. He is a tall man, balding and toothy, with a perpetual countenance that helps to keep a chronic case of paranoia under control. He is often described, by himself and by others, as awkward and bumbling and shy, but there is something quite composed in the person he presents—modest, reserved, diffident—that offers a friendly counterweight to his towering self-confidence.

BEFORE FOX, Nicholson Baker's readers were a small, dedicated band in on a pretty well-kept secret: that he is one of the most eloquent, most eccentric writers in America today. His first book, *The Memory Palace*, proved he could do anything. The miracle of *Jiffy Pop*, the way a woman puts on her makeup, the disturbing tendency of a plastic straw to float in a can of soda—the kinds of vignettes; observations that inhabit most people's minds on a one-night, SRO basis—are brought to moments of perfect prose.

In this, as it happens has been said, subject matter. Baker brings to mind some of the more unattractive Victorian writers, who could describe their appreciation of a butterfly wing, or the shadings of a fossilized rock in almost agonizing detail. Baker brings that same sense of wonder to the contents of an ordinary drugstore and strips away the curtain under which the only details of life are presented in our contemporary novels. Here is a writing about the way one idealized person would search another: "This newswoman sense of newness—whether it was the appearance of another idealized Tin tablet at the neck of a plastic Poe clavicle, or the upturning up your shoulder up of the aculeus, was for me then, and as still, one of the most acute acts of hypnosis that the masculine world can offer."

Says Fogel: "Angeli, a fiction editor at *The New Yorker*, where one of *Sliders*' first short stories was published, 'Nick seems to have direct access to the stuff floating around in our heads and the way we behave when we're being obsessive.' Fogel also says that Angeli "is the guy who left one: Almost in posing his young surgeon in *The Museum* in descending half ellipses to read a surgeon's vouch in a subway, mentions that he lost his own in a rragging. It is virtually the only mention of the dramatic study of the world outside his head, but he knew deeper resonances and significance to his observations in small, unobtrusive details."

In real life, Baker was smuggled and was, in fact, forced as a prisoner to surrender his teeth. He was inspired to write about it in length in *The Memento*, he says, but decided it would upset the delicate pose of the book: Instead he created a cruel and mercantile world, like a ship in a bottle, divorced in some ways from the real world, and the very distance that separated the things he was interested in from the stuff of the evening news became a telling comment in its own right.

In *The Firm*, Baker describes the nugging in detail and dishes out a hard and heart-breaking punishment to the nuggers. But no such punishment is doled out to Anna Serac. (Humbert Humbert should have been so lucky.) In fact, *Bik* or *more* or *less* defends his conduct.

"There's a kind of male arrogance and wish to follow women and all that, that isn't violent, that is just sort of an exaggerated feature of pursuit" he says. "A man sees some one he likes and just wants to know her and doesn't turn out to be a wacko with a gun, or a knife."

If Vin depicted a very strange but agitated sexual desire, one that goes between equal libidinal standing. The formula is one for the boys. "Sex is the one thing that does not mix with all other thinking men," Baker says. "I just can't stand most male persons. But I do love thinking about sex. I love talking about it, I think it's a great subject. It's the one thing, really, that I can talk about in an honest way. I can't talk about my fishing with any body. Or sports. I am linked to other men through this one common interest."

In Arno's eyes, it is the purity of his intentions that justifies his very busy life as a voyeur. Does Baker himself buy this rationale?

"I don't know," he says evasively. "I went to see who finds it compelling and who finds it repulsively contemptible."

Baker already has a fair idea of how his readers may divide, so far, the attacks are split along strictly chthonian lines. "The reactions to his parafictions have been completely accepted by those all the men who have read the book and completely rejected and found hateful by almost all the women," he says, including his wife. "The main thing about this book is that it's going to clarify the differences, real differences, between men and women that the society."

As if we haven't had clarifications enough lately, there are looks abroad in the land advising women to shuck a few more as they would a pet German shepherd! That word, women need to expect and understand is "feminine." And I'm not understanding in its own words. The feminist uses a double definition to women: "This is what men are really like," that reaching of the look would go, "taken exposed in all their grubby voraciousness, adulation, harmlessly unscrupulous, casually innocent sexuality, still seeing you the innocence of your own sex, the worst and best of your kind, wish it, then you can love them first while they really see."

If this is the case, then *The Freeman* may be the most powerful literary argument for sobriety since Madison's sex.

NESTLED WITHIN *THE FERMATA* are two stand-alone set pieces, both of them portmanteaus and bursting with a variety of names, mostly imaginary, constructions. They were the parts of the novel Baker says he was happiest writing.

"Oh, God, do you I had typing those capital letters, PUCK ME WITH YOUR TRUCK," he says, laughing. "I really felt like a pornographer! Those stories are maybe more heartless than anything I've done yet."

"Well, at the end of *his* I kind of have a marriage scene," he says. "They're actually having *real* normal sex." Three thousand miles apart? Over the phone? "Well, that's true. Because I get so tired of reading sex scenes in novels in which



"The idea for the book started out with the fourth-grade fantasy of stripping my teacher's clothes off," Baker says.

people... well, like that phrase 'He entered her.' I just can't read it, I can't think about it, it's terrible, it's been done. It's such naive reasoning to have things be frozen at some earlier or later stage when the characters are still reaching out to each other but aren't quite able to be in the same room with each other, you know, so they either have to whisper through the crack in the door or talk on the phone or something that earlier stages when they're really wanting to be in each other's arms—has a lot more excitement and energy to it."

And more of a stylistic challenge. It is very important to Baker to describe what's never been described, to work over old forms and show them as his own. "He wants to be known as a really groundbreaking novelist," says a friend, the photographer *Alvin Meisel*. "It's like you want to belong to a certain tradition, but you want to destroy it, too." Meisel still remembers Baker's design when he told him that a stylistic canon in the literature stemmed from the basic idea of the day-dreamer. "When he did *Ice Palace*," Baker asked, "dampened."

There's a risk here, of course. The hyperdescriptive style, the macroscopic vision, and now the macroscopic communion of every man's pubescent fantasy—where does the pursuit of the new become a hunt for the lame sideways feel? Can you happily marry *Lyle to Lyle*, the Dog Field Girl ("She walks, she talks, she crawls on her belly like a turtle")?

That is not the issue. Baker says he is simply reinforcing an ambivalence. "The whole of a novel should have less of the ways we can be human and see it, one I'd intended with the earlier books. And it's really taken me two books to catch up to that particular area."

Now he is looking for the readers that will probably drive *The Remains* up the best-seller list. He swears when the subject of marketing is brought up.

"I wasn't sure about *Vlad's* plain brown wrapper, and I think I was right about that, because for a while the stores were all about the hype of it," he says. "In fact, the book seemed to do well before all of that. So I felt like my own somewhat hard-won achievement of not being wrong, the book and having it be the bestseller, like what had been placed away from me by the idea that Random House was a longmaster and through their hype machine was turning this unassuming little book into a best-seller."

This time around, says David Rosenfeld, his editor at Random House, things will not be more subdued. His publishers no longer have to overcome the relative obscurity of the author in selling the book, but neither, Rosenfeld hastens to add, do they plan to be delirious about the book. "There's nothing intended to turn it into a real headline event," Baker says. "I have a very clear conscience about this book, which is not true about other books. It is such a high form of sure, I don't know how anyone can take it seriously."

Baker mulls over this description of his book, but he doesn't endorse it. "Sure—it's the last refuge, isn't it?" he says. "When a book has any objectionable qualities, you call it a sure."

This time around there is a standard Random House galley, and no five minutes just more time as in the Times, but the cover of *The Remains* like the others in the series is carefully placed against a man in a criminal suit as evidence (an evidence piece) will include what's known in the trade as a bellyband—a plastic-covered band imprinted with the title of the book, an attention-prod that ups publication costs by at least twenty cents a copy. The advance pricing is 15.00 per copy. Until recently, the publication date for this book, like *Walt*, was set for Valentine's Day. Baker begged

Rosenfeld to delay it for twenty-four hours. "I think it's a serious error to have two books on a row come out on Valentine's Day," Baker says. "It was pushing it with this was a little too... something. That is really pushing it. This is not a Valentine's book, not this one."

BAKER STILL BRIDLES It is an ill-considered quote that Rosenfeld served up to *The New York Times* during the via publicity push and that contributed mightily to Jonathan Stedley's subsequent hysteria. "Don't let Nick feed me," Rosenfeld told the *Times*. "He wants to be rich and famous. He was in town recently and I suggested we go on Elaine's, since that's what he really wants."

"That was really quite amusing," Baker says now. "I didn't want to go to Elaine's. I didn't get a date. I didn't care, and I saw the bigger media-gear practice as thing they offered me and I looked around and I think hands with Joshua Kestelman and it was over—the way my Elaine's experience."

"I'm totally one of it, I kept away from New York. It seemed totally unfair to make me into this wannabe New York insider."

Rosenfeld is cheerfully contemptuous. "Fuck 'em if they can't take a joke," he says. "I just demonstrates that writers should never let their editors talk about them, as a general rule." He also doesn't seem to have changed his mind much. "Nick appears to narrow from the street and public but doesn't want to be a part of a literary group. I can't think of anything that would stand him in terms of conventional fame. He would like to be very well known. He seems to be haunted constantly here and abroad."

But the hype has done no damage. Mission: Nicholson Baker and a certain glaze comes over the eyes—oh, him? the media canon? This occasion doesn't surprise Knopf editor Gary Pinkner, who, having published Jay McInerney's *Bright Lights, Big City* and Donna Tartt's *The Secret History* in no slouch herself at books marketing. "Before *Vlad*, the same people would be the most aggressive thing to come down the pipe in years," he says. "My Baker made the mistake of being good and getting lucky, and people get tired of a star a while. There's a subsequence that will always linger."

Baker, says Pinkner, that the anonymity a more discreet ad campaign might have brought. "There's little choice in the matter of marketing," he says. "But my work unknown books to have little things to wear the book some attention. To not want that is like not wanting a live-book put to win the *Massacre* were so much to have that feeling put." And if it were. "There's an obvious backlash quotient. That's a problem every writer should have. I think it burns their feelings and pains them out, but the good writers keep writing and now they have the huge advantage of having readers and that's a great thing."

Now Nicholson Baker will attract readers who have a large leap to make. Baker's that four books, after all, worked very hard to induce them with a personality they thought they knew. Now he's written a book that will make some of them very angry, and the answer to the question of why this book followed like will ultimately determine how seriously he's taken as a writer. *The Remains* a quiet attempt to cash in on a high-profile, somewhat reputation, as some will undoubtedly see it. Or an act of courage by a successful writer willing to break new ground, even if it turns to quackery? Good faith would give Baker the benefit of that doubt, but then good faith, as the case of *Arno Strain* makes clear, isn't always good enough. ■

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Bullet PROOF

Oliver North was supposed to take the fall for Iran-contra, but instead of going to jail, the implacable ex-marine may well be headed for the U. S. Senate. By Martha Sherrill

He's relaxed, almost happy, the further away he gets from Washington and northern Virginia and all the snobbery. Behind a white picket fence in Norfolk, he stands near some pinkish-red balloons and a tylon American flag and gives a little front-burn stump speech. His black wing tips sink into the grass. His charcoal pin-stripe jacket is slung over his left shoulder. His Annapolis ring is gold and bulky and bigger than any of his knucklers. He urges the crowd to vote Republican, gives them Ollie North's Three P's of Politics: Pray, Pledge, Participate. He wants everybody to become "people of action." He holds his fingers out when he talks, as if he's waiting to catch a football from the sky.

It's late August and hot, and you can see the shadow of a T-shirt under his dress shirt. You can see the outline of a paunch too. His belt rides low. Oliver North has matured, softened. His famous hair is grayer, his boxer's nose has filled out. At fifty, he looks almost grown-up. He wants to be a senator.

"I love you him," whispers a white-haired lady from the Republican Women's Club of Norfolk.

"Me, too," says the old gal next to her.

"I think," says the white-haired dame, "he was done dirty."

The next day at the town hall in Bowling Green, a woman in a golf skirt comes away from him wiping her eyes, fanning a smoky Polaraid of herself standing with North—lasting proof of their brief encounter. "I got so emotional just thinking about him,"

also says in Petersburg, later that week hundreds turn up for an outdoor rally in a public park, wondering toward him on the grass as though pulled by a gentle gravitational force.

"I like people," North says when told he seems to lose being a public figure. "I liked being a nurse. And I don't think you succeed as a nurse unless you're comfortable with other human beings. You're in a position of trying to move them to do very difficult, sometimes dangerous things. I think some of those skills translate into public service."

He says for hours, until everybody gets their heads agitated, then Folomides, gets the feeling—the rush—of being with him. At the Tripsie Corner Marriott on October 8, the day after North's fifth birthday a tidal wave of youth in blue blazers and fresh haircuts—the College Republicans during their national convention meeting—whooop and hark and scream when North enters their wilderness conference room. As he enters to the red lantern, they begin chanting "Off with Clinton! Off with Clinton!"

Off? North starts out with his naturally overvalued leek—a telly, ovate, gap toothed jaw—open wide. He holds

There stories don't add up, of course. Reagan says one thing, North says another. The former president maintains that he knew zero to nothing about Iran or Contra or Iran-contra. The latter or colored maintains that Reagan kept up with the deals—arms for hostages in Iran and the diversion of funds to the contra in Nicaragua. "I believe," North says in Underfire his account of the scandal, "that the president was fully informed about my activities."

When he mentions Reagan now in speeches and in his books, there's always a hint of pathos, of disappointment. Behind his gaudy blue Reagan's podium in public appearance after public appearance—he uses the words again California—seems a fair amount of contempt. He says he feels "betrayed" sometimes.

But not enough to lose a vote. We are meant to read between the lines and not far from them. Remember them as friends. Clinton then returns in harmony North has may stand ambiguous the art of leaving many things unsaid to allow for the best possible interpretation, and in this way he's as beautifully vague as his old boss.



CITIZEN REBEL: Whenever he goes, people think he was "kissed dirty" (left), clapping his Republicans in Virginia, 1991.)

it for what seems like days. He waits for a hint of a bill, then jumps into an attack on the White House and "this last decision, when Mitt Clinton was elected." He moves on to Bill Clinton and his policy in Somalia, striking the College Republicans.

"The United States," North says, "does not need its sons and daughters into hands' way to prove the method of anybody." He makes "Big government" and "over increasing debt" and the "Balk-Wilder cult" that's been running the state of Virginia. He moves on to jobs, a better future, his three p of politics. His voice is magic, husky, airy, breathy, coming up from his throat with all his frank. Cages enclose him. He wears a little nostalgia about the golden days of the opium, about "decisions that gave an aging Californian a chance to be president of the United States."

"Bugs-as? Reagan? Reagan?"

Nobody seems to be enjoying the irony of that or to be bothered by it. Remonstrating contacts take too much energy. And it's so complicated. The aging Californian's name is a charged season name, since, as though Clinton were his son, his cartoon manner that it's not just kids—too young to remember the exact details of Iran-contra—who associate Bill North with Ronald Reagan. They come to gusher, openly arguing, diagnosing like two positive poles of argument that can never touch.

AS HE MOVES FOR THE U.S. Senate in Virginia, traveling into every Republican backwater, every "noisy and noisy" of the Old Dominion as he likes to say North doesn't get many answers. "Nothing personal," he says, indicating that he still feels he's a victim of a "liberal media" bias, that he's often portrayed as far more conservative than he is. If you follow him around, he'll answer a question here and there—behind a towel bath, on the early in front of a hotel. He was against NAFTA and the Brady Bill. He is for some limit. He has supported several pro-choice candidates in races for the Virginia House of Delegates.

He has evolved into a winning politician—guaranteed his outgoing—pure Jimmy Stewart, pure Ross Perot. And when he wants to be emotional, pure Bill Clinton. His eyes well up, faster, his handshake feels more sincere, his gestures often more intense. He's a gayer, gayer man, a man who can talk about Lerner closer and A.K. 47 rifles. And like Clinton and North he's behind the social fence between his own election and the impression he gives that he's never left the farm.

Iran-contra is "behind" here, he likes to say. He could mean that it's over. He could also mean that it's behind him, reporting him. In truth, it's the best thing that ever happened to North—having brought him fame, money, respect

A Republican has even been rustled up to run against North—Jim Miller, from the bygone Reagan home team. People approach him at parties and say, "I'm so glad that you're running, Jim. Frankly, Ollie scares me."

dom, and the chance to beat incumbent Chuck Robb or Virginia governor Doug Wilder in the fall election. He says not the answering questions about it. He may not be looking forward to traveling in the Second House and later this year he'll be North's lucky—and he seems to be, infinitely—less certain well always be with him. It's his coronation cap, his Medusa's head. It's the proof of his strength and his triumph.

In front of crowds, he'll make subtle references to those days, joking about "learned and on campaign" and "shredding," or referring to Washington as "that old swamp on the Potomac" and Congress as "The permanent government of people who think they're in the House of Lords." Everybody will nod their heads, smile, and share in the happy memory of his standing in session, models swinging, making kooky of those buffoons on the Hill.

sometimes a notch higher. Half of Virginia believes North to be "a genuine American hero," according to various polls. He can't comment on the [Wilder] report," he says. "Because, as I understand it, there's an order that says I can't."

He seems to clear. He looks worried. He makes a sort of pre-convention, a steady and single-mindedness and certainty. He's the guy Dan Quayle tried to be and want to. And he makes the sort of an aware, aware and indecisive, like an Iran-contra conference sitting in personal judgment.

IN THE REAGAN years, North has come to embody Republicanism and the state of Virginia. But in 1991, the old Reagan loyalists and the military were the first to turn and are still the first to criticize. Deigns his turn, for sake in Vietnam, and his two Pur-ple Hearts, the military guys are hard on poor Ollie. The old Reaganers—many have settled in Northern Virginia—are even worse. Handbook once said words like *look* and *notice* and *blow*. The careful ones say, "I'm not sure he showed good judgment or served the president well." They once lost forward over luncheon tables and whiskey shacks, clucking and "He should have just taken the fall and shut up." To them, he looks less like a patriot and more like a trustee—or a fellow who got off on a technology.

A Republican has even been rustled up to run against him—Jim Miller, a worthy serious man right from the bygone Reagan home team. Miller used to be director of the Office of Management and Budget, a position very senior to any lieutenant colonel on the National Security Council. He has no dish or celebrity—he makes North look like a kid. He's a Virginian, son of a Virginian, son of a Virginian, let's a McGowan, son, Republican. He doesn't play to emotions. He gets folks, but not to Motherly RPT. He has a learned, redneckish appeal. People may not vote in lines for Miller's autograph, but they approach him at parties and say "I'm so glad that you're running, Jim. Frankly, Ollie scares me."

Ed Morse has already written a letter on behalf of Miller, and so has Lynn Neider. Alexander Hargis has endorsed him as a supporter, as well as former secretary of defense Frank Carlucci and Rep. Weinberger, and former Navy secretary Lawrence Garrett and John Lehman. George Schultz has been kind enough to send a check. Pat Buchanan has been kind enough to remain silent.

"Something might be one way of putting it. A jabby might be another," says Joe Egan, North's political advisor, about the Republican establishment's attitude toward his client. "Many of these old guys are pretty pathetic, you know and deserve some of their own credit for helping the Reagan administration become so vilified."

Miller is gaudy, with a million dollars to spend, that North might sound so much like a religious fanatic, still another gay joke in public, or point the stick to one broad a brotherhood—and lose the momentum at the Republican state convention in Richmond in June. Everybody knows the Democrats are in big trouble already. One formidable polycy, Chuck Robb and Doug Wilder are likely to kill each other long before November, their final gap back years

Governor Wilkie has talked about running in an independent if he doesn't get the Democratic nomination. Senator Robb never talked much at all since winning his bid for a second term from beauty queen Jo Collins in a New York hotel and then routinely before a grand jury that his aides had taped some of Ross Wilkie's car-phone conversations.

A couple of other Republicans have snafu'd out things enough to be easily encouraged, too. Cola Powell—who would rather be a Republican than be encouraged to run, but he's probably saying his 70 percent approval rating for 1994. Jay Byrnes, the U.S. attorney who prosecuted D.C. mayor Marion Barry in winning sound, spending even less than Miller on an idling campaign. And Kenneth Shaw, former solicitor general, has talked offensively about running.

North has high positive but high negatives, too. "Lots of people have decided to definitely not vote for Ollie," says Boyd Meren, who is Miller's political adviser and consultant. "Who are they? The moral majority and former Reagan people who are turned off by the Christian Right."

The irony of this—these people turned off by the Christian Right—is of course another lesson in the remarkable flexibility of morals. It wasn't so long ago that conservatives were happy to embrace the Christian Right, take their money and make halfhearted attempts to outlaw abortion. Back in November 1988, when Meier and company started paddling away from North in Liberia, it was a relief to some that the Christians, at least, were being true to Ollie. Nobody wanted him to be friendly. Nobody wanted to give him any more reasons to complain, rather. And it was a relief, some felt, that the Republicans who made other Republicans uncomfortable could stick together.

THE FIRST OF HIS THREE P's is for pay. "We've got to pay for the leadership of this country," North says in all his speeches. It's pay he has promised just. He always with a check, too, about how a chaplain in Missouri came to pay "a few weeks ago" and offered him a "perfect sense to use when praying for our President—Barack, sure."

"I don't have that vote committed to me," explains North. "So I looked it up."

At this point in the telling of the joke, he pulls a little when piece of paper from inside his charcoal suit jacket. He appears not to have committed the line to memory but of course he has. "Think of me as the good book," he says, studying the paper very closely. "May his day be few and my another take his life."

During last month, he repeated something—often with the same double-edged effect—from the driver's seat of his car for the TV camera. Ollie North was raised Roman Catholic, so clear by the son of an Irish mother. In Vietnam he suggested his men attend services regularly, and he thanked the Lord when he came home safely, with just a few wounds. It wasn't until 1991, when his wife, Betty, asked for a divorce—North was not obsessed with his work—that he stumbled onto an emotional and spiritual path that led him to a Navy chaplain who provided marriage counseling. North attended sessions before the birth of his second daughter in 1992 and became a born-again Christian in 1993. He and Betty became active in the charismatic Episcopalian church (same sect as Clarence Thomas), attending prayer meetings and weekly Bible study and morning prayers minutes. During the White House

years, North drove to work in a station wagon with a pre-lit bumper sticker.

After the language he began touring the country, giving Christian sermons. He became close to the Robertson and Ralph Reed. He gave the commencement address at Jerry Falwell's Liberty University, too, in the spring of 1988, and Falwell called him "a pastor." When the time came that North needed money, he turned to the Christian Right, a group accustomed to giving.

And he was used to asking. Crissling for cents supplies hadn't been easy—during his time at the NSC, North raised \$50 million from private donors around the world. His colleagues in the White House might now remember him as "a wonder" and "a take the hell kind of guy" who "didn't go with the flow," but he sure knew how to sell. In meetings he was vibrant and emotional, used symbolism to great effect, and brought charts and graphs. He also worked at it, like a soldier. He spent six days a week at the Old Executive Office Building, sometimes sleeping there, staying away on Sundays to go to church with the family. He showed "around the clock," says Michael Carter, who was with the NSC at the time. Carter remembers sitting next to North in a meeting and seeing he had a suitcase on the floor. "Who's in there?" Carter asked him.

"I'm going to London tonight," North said. The next day Carter looked around another meeting table and was surprised to see North there.

"Thought you were going to London," he said.

"I did." For the last five years, North's been on a pace just like that, gathering cash, it seems, by dying to pass, just like that, by holding that goodly smile. In 1991 he started raising money for his defense fund and wound up with \$13 million, enough to pay for traveling expenses and direct mail costs. In 1992 he started a nonprofit educational foundation called the Freedom Alliance. It has brought things like homecoming in the military and violent language in rap music—and has collected to millions. In 1993 he came out with *Unleash His Power*, a book about speaking truth as a pastor. The book sold well, and he filed to run for the Senate. He's earned so much money in these years—by book royalties and speaking fees alone—that his own Guardian Technologies Inc.—the intellectual-property-management company he started with Joe Permuter, a former CIA action chief in Costa Rica—has grown to twenty-three employees and will bring in more than \$2 million in sales, but North renounces his salary. He's got enough money already.

North's family once rocked by public scrutiny and controversy in 1991 TV camera crew spent seven months straight, including Christmas and Easter, camped out on the porch of the North's Great Falls house—some to have poster, too. The modest digs at Fairfax County have been sold. The days of buying used cars are over. Betty and their four kids have settled into a 194-acre farm in Clarke County on the banks of the Shenandoah with the spectacular Blue Ridge Mountains behind them. The family calls the place Narnia, after the children's books by C. S. Lewis, the conservative Christian fabulist. Although North usually considers himself a conservative, there comes a day, sometimes in three different parts of Virginia—he doesn't accept many suggestions to keep him from home overnight. On weekends in the fall and spring, he's usually seen at his daughters' divorce and jumping competitors. Betty is still an operative with the Great Falls Pony Club, spending weekends leading the wheel

North's resurrection seems miraculous to Washingtonians. He was left for dead by the Reaganites, was embraced and healed by the Christian Right, and now appears to be living eternally with the contradictions.

of a rig, hitching trailers to trucks, and growing horses. Their son, Stuart, out of college, works for an ad-services company.

While other candidates for the Senate are talking about raising \$5 million for the general election—Robb spent \$4.5 million last time and won easily—North has expressed an appetite for \$15 million. He should have no trouble getting it. "All he has to do is send out that last letter," says Ernest Burger of the Fairfax County Board of Supervisors, "and all start pouring in. It's a magnet for money."

"This has a huge national donor base," says Charlie Black, the well-known Republican strategist with a beach head in Alexandria, Virginia. "Times what I understand, he's got hundreds of thousands of people who have given to him over the years and who are likely to give again. The only politician who rivals that is Jesse Helms, but it took him twenty years."

Unlike Helms, North won't have to promise much to his thousands of the hard supporters or even run as an endorsement candidate. Abortion isn't an issue anymore—George Bush may have courted them and gained his convention not to offend them, but many of the Christian Right wanted to Perot in the last presidential election despite his pro-choice position. Abortion won't be raised as an issue unless North himself starts raising it, and he won't.

"No candidate can run as a single-issue candidate anymore," he says on the curb in front of the Radisson-Mariotte. "Whether it's gun control or crime or abortion or taxes or spending. It's just Ronald Reagan said. Candidates who get elected are people who represent 60 to 90 percent of the values of the electorate."

So even Virginians who would normally be North opponents, that kind of list sounds of compromise, a dilution of the Right's agenda. But Mike Parris, the popular conservative who narrowly lost a race for lieutenant governor of Virginia last November, asserts that the general description "family-values candidate" is what the religious Right looks for now, rather than the strict pro-life standard.

"Let's face it," Parris says, "because of court rulings and our current position, the pro-life and pro-choice movements have lost momentum. North is running on his charisma."

On the stump, North sounds a bit like Perot, an outsider who can't really belong to anybody, a small guy who's bigger than the system. He takes shots at Clinton every chance he gets. He emphasizes his business experience—to tell himself as a manager and penny pincher. He talks about the Marines and leadership. The conversation about



Sign on: Despite iron-curtain, North can still trade on his name

God is mutual, non-denominational, and the something that has been stamped on a coin.

"It's always portrayed as a religious right-wing fanatic," says Joe Elton, his adviser. "But I want to point out that he's pragmatic. He won't go into the Senate and sit at weekends. He's not going to wait around for victory, either. He'll want to be productive and not just waste time with a religious Right agenda."

ON ELECTION NIGHT last year in Virginia, Ollie North's caught

by a local TV camera in an alleyway. He wears a dark overcoat against the November weather and greets the Republicans as voters. Virginia's newly elected governor, George Allen, another right-winger who made himself as much reasonable, more moderate. North looks pale in the bright lights, and a little blank. In Vietnam his platoon called him Blue—code name for the compass direction of north—but it's a fitting name for his specific mission. He gives off bluntness. He carries uniformity, simplicity, accuracy, sobriety, even purity and goodness. He seems to be what he sounds like—strong to be square-shouldered and honest—even while he's talking about misleading Congress. He is flexible while not appearing to give an inch.

"It's amazing, isn't it?" the assistant in Lawrence Wilkie's office says when she's asked about North's bid for the Senate. Amendment is a typical reaction. His resurrection seems miraculous to Washingtonians, people who have witnessed other phantasms, G. Gordon Liddy and Michael Deaver and Richard Nixon, but none so massive and thorough or so cautiously biblicized. He was left for dead by the Reaganites, was embraced and healed by the Christian Right, and now appears to be living eternally with all the contradictions.

He seems to be happy just standing there, in the bright TV lights—standing for things. He stands for the Marines, for decorated heroes of war—and for lost honor too. He stands for the Reagan days and for a little guy who stood up to Reagan. He stands for the far Right and big wet Republicans, for big Washington allies and small-town indignity. He stands for media victims and for television stations. He stands for efficiency and blunder, for hard work and the easy ride, for guts and self-pity for freedom and plunder, for candor and secrecy, for off-stamping and following orders, for the Bushwachs years and the Vietnam War. He stands for history and for the necessary lie.

"It's a complicated process," says Elton, "deciding you support Ollie North."

PERHAPS NORTH LIKES to attack the "liberal media," and rarely gives a speech without mentioning "The New York Crusier" and "The Washington Compass" and the "June Pseudo Network." The press has been either loud and blind of late, but he seems to enjoy having great enemies, even if he has to imagine them. Both the *Crusier* and the *Compass*, considered to be biased by conservative, have run stories about his race for Senate without check sheets. The worst attack by far has come from North's own territory from God-fearing, Middle America—the magazine he now refers to as "Reader's Digest" ("Last June *Reader's Digest* called 'Does Oliver North Tell the Truth?' son in *Reader's Digest*").

The press is mostly a rebuke of North's past approval lots of bragging—how he played alone with Reagan in the Oval Office and so forth—and embarrassment in the cash flow of Iran-contra money (mostly supplied) and a word can be bought with cash in a Kmart's Treasury in Virginia. Virginia North has also donated, in the past, that during the Iran-contra administration Ross Perot urged him to announce that the president knew nothing. Now it turns out—why isn't this a surprise?—that Perot taped his split conversations with North and that he simply encouraged him "to tell the truth."

It's this sort of thing that makes North appear foolish and unreliable, like a look and a word. And it's what makes people estimate that his struggle against the Democratic Party will be the hardest, most covered Senate race this year. North may come out of this struggle, super-ego exposed, clean. He says, only by shedding his image as an extremist, dropping his conformity to sex personnel, espionage kinks, trying not to make politically incorrect remarks about honor schools (at a recent last spring, he pretended to be a gay man calling the White House and spoke with a lady) but his real money before Congress—all on tape, of course—could easily be handed out by an opponent and used in negative ads.

"Wilder and Robb will make an issue of Iran-contra, but I don't think anybody cares," says Jim Bradley Jr., the former *ABC* editor who is writing a book, *The Rise and Fall of Oliver North*. "Lots of people thought it was more serious than they thought, but Reagan showed how you can ride out a political crisis by force of personality. Ollie could keep proving that."

"People either love Ollie or hate him," says Ernest Berger. "I think that's the sign of a great leader."

If there is, then Chuck Robb and Doug Wilder are great leaders, too. Robb shows that kind of them, like North, as hard more than they are loved. North's incredible win in October was as personal, his unlikely victory at present Robb was at 30 percent inevitable, all unfavorable. Wilder, 30 favorable and a whopping 67 unfavorable, like Robb and Wilder also seems to be big characters with big problems to overcome. They both have presidential ambitions—or once did, only to see their chances keep slipping further down a sinkhole of their own creation. As governor, Wilder (perhaps the most Machiavellian politician in the country) has feuded with everybody in Virginia—from the House leadership to the Black Caucus. He seems too much a showman, while Robb is not enough of one. Even Robb's supporters complain he's "cold" and "perpetually in a department."

Robb's weaknesses are North's strengths. And a duel between them, contrary to one's nature, is likely to be less personal, less nasty—they both have ethical complications to explain—and more about politics. "He's vulnerable on lots of issues," says North of Robb. "Particularly his past endorsement of the Clinton agenda."

"I understand he has a good combat record," says Robb of North, "but that's as far as I'll go." Robb's personal views on the Democratic that Robb will be given an ambassadorship by President Clinton, to get him out of a close race with North ("We heard that," laughed Robb, when asked about the rumor). "Somebody suggested Secretary of Defense, so as an ambassadorship is really not that exciting." That would leave the field open for Wilder, who is described by North's adviser Elton as "a politician without pain" and "not unlike Ollie, a snapper, an actor performing on the political stage, a man who's had to stand up for himself."

Up against Wilder, North, political expert in Virginia speculate, may be in for some trouble. "Being a celebrity is different from running for public office," says Mark Warner, Virginia Democratic chairman. Candidates Robert Scott, the others closer to the follow, say it more diplomatically. "I know the greatest respect for Ollie North, but if he runs for the Senate in Virginia, I don't believe he can win." People say that the lobby small news events he's been doing for a couple of years—the community centers and from porches with real people—well, it's nothing like the big one.

"Wilder," says Boyd Marcus, "will on Ollie above."

Wilder in the gap, of course, who'd miss the specter of Iran-contra again and try to make the most of North's recent past appearance this year as a witness in a lawsuit the Justice Department has filed against his former associates, Richard Secord and Albert Hakim. (The government estimates that North helped some more than six million for seven operations—where Secord and Hakim got into some black accounts—and that two million is still an unaccounted for.) Wilder is the one who'll show clips of North during the hearings and bring up the damning little details put forward by *Reader's Digest*. The only thing North will be able to do is bring up North's gay play, since Wilder, it seems, told one of his own last year, too. And gay plays can only help you in Virginia, anyway.

But how far can Wilder go? How much can the 1980s learn North? What can be said that hasn't been said already?

IN KNOWLEDGE CHECK, the race is going down behind the town hall, and the music from the barbershop is warming into the right air. Folks are slipping out, carrying baked goods they've bought to save money for the Caroline County Republicans. They walk to their cars, turning some, waving some, a Ollie North.

He stands there, swart back. He makes—perhaps warmly—reply to "Brian." Then he's sitting with politics today in that it's become machine-oriented. He says, moving in closer, "It doesn't focus on listening to people. My grandmother used to say that you learn more when you listen than when you talk. And she was right."

He never returned on being famous, on being in the public eye. He never had a sense of destiny about what he's now doing. To this point in his life, he's evolved only concepts for the machine he's now trying to unfathom. North is famous for his contempt. Six years ago, when hundreds of people turned up at the Memorial Bridge, urging him to run against Robb, it seemed insignificant. Now, whatever desire he has to run, he seems less free of it.

He'll take one more question, he says. Nothing personal, but he's got to move on. He's asked "Do you think Iran-contra and turned it into something that works, haven't you?"

"Hey," North answers, eyes shining. "I'm a big believer in running things into lemonade."

Only two terms. He promises. ■



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Kiss & Tell

He was a writer and an aspiring screenwriter. She was a waitress and an aspiring actress. Then she made it big and he began plotting his revenge.

By Mary Gattskill

LESLY WAS DESPERATELY WRITING a cruel, boring screenplay that he could hardly bring himself to face, even with a bottle of Scotch at his side and the TV companionably talking in the background. The failure in this regard was highlighted for him—he knew it was petty but he couldn't help it—by the recent success of the woman he loved, Nicki Pantano, who had just made her film debut in a thing called *Queen of Night* and was now being invited to glamorous parties. His normal misery over this was exacerbated by the fact that, after having wild, drunken sex with her three times, little Nicki had decided that they should just be friends.

The drunken sex and her terrible decision, expressed in a pause screen phone conversation, had occurred over a year ago, and he'd since been hanging around, waiting for coffee after maddening coffee, plotting her eventual change of heart, which now seemed, in the light of her impending celebrity, unlikely. Obviously his only hope was to sell the screenplay and become a celebrity himself and time was running out.

Thus, fighting on through failing hope, he sat down before a hostile piece of paper every night, drunk or sober, even when exhausted by his degrading restaurant job, ploughing through scotch-soaked, morose, exploding heads, and the like, all in no avail.

Lesly's apartment was not an inspiring place to work, especially for someone who now himself hung out over an abyss by his fingertips. He'd moved in after graduating from film school. He'd perversely dwelt on the ugliness of the place, romantically seeing him-

self as the alcoholic hero of some moody detective series available only in the hazy haze of sand-book stores, heartily turning his back on the world of success for mysterious reasons. He'd been lured to romance it, after an amazing, furious interview in his apartment he'd been hired as a gaffer for the damaged producer of a very slather-sauce outfit, he'd sunk into the dark glamour of the "King Parake Room," which is what he'd almost immediately named his apartment.

It was a gloomy rectangle on the ground floor of a rotting Greenwich Village restaurant, with stained leaden walls. The ceiling sagged as if it were about to cry, plaster from the crumbling walls gathered in lumpy blobs on the uneven floor. His dresser looked like a hiding place for dismembered corpses, his throw rug emphasized the sad state of the splintering floor, his mattress was beset by a mass snarl of blankets.

"Welcome to the more than Oriental splendor of the King Parake Room." He'd deliriously greeted this greeting as he'd welcomed Nicki in for the first time.

He'd met her at the West Village restaurant where they'd both worked. He'd been mysteriously taken with her unconventional beauty—her wide, long-limbed green eyes and luminous skin were the only normally pretty features on her bony, angular face. Her thin brown hair would've been money on another girl, but it accentuated her Balthusian finery. Her aristocratically thin lips and eyebrows, which could've made her face too sparse, instead added an alarming severity that offset her expressive eyes, giving her the piercing, unre-



His normal misery was exacerbated by the fact that, after having wild, drunken sex with him, Nicki had decided that they should just be friends. His only hope was to become a celebrity himself.

Kiss & Tell

say of a small cat. His body was merely pretty, but it was made beautiful by the amiable elegance that she, discharged like a movie, graced upon as she ran from kitchen to dining hall with her hands full of plates.

Midnight, a year developing the courage to take her out, had been repeated once, and then, as he was resigning from self to casual flirtation, she'd asked him if they had dinner; during which she'd chattered happily, dropping silverware and flicking remotes. They saw a movie and then went to a cheerful bar where massive music flowed from the sound system in bright ribbons, and Nicki got clappy drinks in the middle of her expensive analysis of the film. He'd thought she was going wild, but he'd noticed himself opening the door to the ladies' room. This was an odd development in view of his cautious nature; he'd decided he'd better get her out before she looked over.

"Lemon," he said, grasping her jacket as she slid giggling down the side of the building next to the bar. "Do you realize I've been adding you for over a year, from afar, and now here you are falling on my face? Pull yourself together, it's ironic."

She giggled, again, and put her cold fingertips on his face. Clearly, there were no clues. He looked at her into a cab and then he got in his life, glowing yet slightly disappointed that it had been so easy after all. At least he could put to rest his worry that her delicate sensibilities would be offended by the ardor of the King Hersek Room, as she would probably barely see it.

He was certain about that. As soon as they entered, her suddenly clear eyes moved slowly from crawling wall to collapsing lookouts, and then she returned himself to go to the bathroom, where she crawled around for several minutes pouring, running, water, probably crying through the machine card. He was thinking he'd made a terrible blunder there and that he should take her home when she emerged without her pants and from down on the bed. She was a pair of cream-colored pajamas over which peeped curly brown hair.

"Well," she said, "as they say, it's much too drunk to fuck." With this she climbed under the blankets and curled next to a sleeping person.

He politely turned off the light over the bed, put a bottle of vodka, and sat down to contemplate the small bundle on his bed. Her thin shoulder in an T-shirt was exposed, a looked both winsome and pathetic in the King Hersek Room. This would be easy, he thought, if they were anywhere between elegance and recovery here. They were both over duty, they had been under their eyes, and now on their faces, that more and more showed their essential confused midlife.

He finished the bottle, then, crawled into bed with his clothes on and read into a cozying blackout with his arm around the gently breathing body of his co-worker.

He woke up feeling like a graduate at the foot of the bed with his chemistry feet, startled into his arms and smiled with his muscles smeared eyes. Their clothes came off. She reached between his legs and smiled him face and

af. With sudden hands he groped her breasts and genitalia, he inserted and pulled her through a pounding headache.

He made them see, and they closed off hands of broken bread to have with butter and jelly. She sat with the blanket wound about her hips, crumbs and a blob of purple jelly seeping, nearly across her breasts. "I haven't done this for years," she said. "The last two guys I was with were married so they never open the night. This is a first."

The next day was more sunny. They had dinner at a Thai restaurant, Nicki sat next to a fourth grade practicing penmanship and grunted with her cleaved neck while talking about her most recent coming-of-age failures as if they were hilariously funny. He asked her how she felt about their night together. She seemed surprised, she shrugged and said she didn't know yet. He didn't want her to think he was serious, so he didn't pursue the subject. Instead, he listened to her talk about her therapists, psychics, and healers, and the progress she was making on all her problems, the great progress her life was about to take. Her talk had the aggressive charm of someone who has just met you and wants to make a good impression, as well as the false candor of someone who doesn't want to reveal herself yet wants to give you the impression of doing so. They, he wanted to say, just fucked you. To which she would probably have answered, "So what?"

Still, he walked with her to his apartment for "tea." That meant roughly fifteen minutes of conversation, after which they rolled around poking each other's faces with their tongues. It was fun, but he had not recovered from the sense of remorse her dinner chatter had created him, and he was, at this moment he didn't want to look back. He wanted to find the vibrant girl he'd seen wearing crimson, so he worked, but she didn't seem to be present in the body of the agreeable but somehow inaccessible person who was pulling off his pants. Watching her he didn't feel he could chase her to the radiator and perform on her every obscure sex profile and still not possess her.

Normally, this made him feel he must possess her. Ironically he turned her around, pressing himself against her back and moved, dumb at. Her body softened, her hair ruffled in growing. He pinched one leg and her hands opened, her elbows relaxed out. He saw her cramped, side-turned face from behind her foregrounded laughter.

Afterward, there was a massive moment of separate breathing, and then, suddenly she turned her head and looked him hard, face with her lips, close with her hair, dry tongue. A gap of happiness escaped him; she was his. He held her all morning while the radio mentioned some congressional scandal and she sleepily disengaged an ancient color of men and the empty sheets with every slight movement.

The third time was a diversion into the King Hersek Room during which the ground outside him backboard, showing him the newly powdered flesh of her breasts, as much as the unimportant ugliness of which indicated him all the more.

It was after this strenuousness that, as they lay sharing a

smoker on the mattress, she told him she had been sexually molested as a child. He was so startled by this information that afterward he couldn't remember how or why it had come up, suddenly it was just there.

"It was my uncle," she said. "He and my aunt had sex with me when I was nine and ten. Then they moved and then he killed himself." She drew on her cigarette and for an instant he felt himself an eavesdropper he had seen an other woman but never on Nicki, a right downword more than was cynical and tough, yet weak and repeatedly vulnerable.

He felt for her. He wondered if this moment she was an emotional wreck. "Do you think it had a terrible effect on you?"

She looked thoughtful. "For a long time I tried to deny it had any impact at all. But I think it formed my sexuality a lot."

He started to ask how, then put his arms around her instead.

A week after this discussion they had the remaining conversation. He said he hoped they could still be friends. She said of course she cared for him as a friend, and they hung up. He felt dazed, as if he had suddenly found himself in a commercial for a love movie in which he had rapidly performed scenes of seduction, passion, emotional bonding—and then the commercial was over. He lay down and wondered if this development had anything to do with her story about her uncle.

THESE THINGS LONG, ARDUOUS friendship ground into being. They saw each other mostly at work, swimming through the slow daily conversations of people doing jobs they don't like. At first he didn't long for her, although her abrupt ending of the after hours him. He wasn't sure how he felt about her, and at times he thought there was something wrong with her. His ambivalence made him receptive to her, and his receptivity gradually made him feel her charm and beauty over more potency than before. He would look at her and it would seem, even in the black uncertainty of her seasons were, even at the squallor of the book club, as if she were laughing at a cat on the deck of an ocean liner.

Then one day he opened the door to the cold, cardboard-filled changing room and saw Nicki and a large blond woman named Darlene looking at themselves in a shirt of mirror propped against the wall. Darlene was scolding, gazing directly at her own ratty face. Nicki stood behind her, tenderly combing the other's girth long, pale hair. Darlene and he to him to the mirror. Nicki turned, dropped the comb and looked at him, her eyes so startled and fraught that his heart filled with echoes of their intimacy. Suddenly he felt he had made, her laugh again, but then, the little, muscular energy of her body beneath his hands. He wanted to have her and he couldn't.

"Darlene is so beautiful!" said Nicki later. "I'd looked like her, I'd be a movie star by now."

"I was a casting director. Darlene wouldn't stand a

chance against you," he said. "She's just another pretty blonde. You're beautiful!"

She blushed and touched his hand with her cold fingers. "Thanks. Lady," she said.

They had coffee, then began to go to dinner and the occasional movie together. He felt her slowly opening to him in a way that seemed more genuine and incrementally deeper than during their previous hours alone—and he felt himself opening to her. He remembered their love-making with a poignant shudder, so brief, superficial, naive, seemed to have been an exquisite disposition of what he imagined could happen between them. When he looked into her beautiful coffee-shadowed eyes it seemed to him that she was thinking these things: "You. The afternoon spent with her in coffee shops reduced a married glow that permeated the entire week, looking once into the face, and every week was saturated with her presence. He saw other women so casually, but the sight of them naked in his bed could not disarm him as Nicki had, seeing fully clothed in a cafe window, sunlight taking the morning of age and youth in her thirty-two-year-old face. He thought, *It's only a matter of time*."

This thought was nurtured by the incredible fact that, in the lengthening time since their affair, she hadn't become involved with anyone else. An expression in her eyes or a slight movement of her body toward him could make the heart on his neck race, he'd move forward to meet the embrace he was craving; then she'd lean back in her chair and give him conversation again. Still, he dreamed of her.

THEN ONE AFTERNOON, AS HE WAS fighting his way out of an antique shop, the Carthusian of his answering machine called in warning and her voice flattered him. "Lady," she said, "it finally happened! I undressed for Brian Blomman and I got it. It's going to be a real movie and he—he—he loved me."

He lay back in his bed and cried, "Oh, my God."

When he left for L.A., he thought he was going to cry, but he wasn't. He required to New York often and they would sometimes have dinner together. She would describe for him the important artificial world of the moment in with its harsh arena horrids of light and sounds that, by revealing immortality become the magic glass that humans stepped into and mystic beings stepped out of. He liked to pretend her on the set, her face covered with the sugar dust of cosmetic powder, her eyes lidded with cosmetic jewels, surrounded by and bathed in light that was like pure technological disaster.

He kept expecting her—encouraging her even—to deny the decided self-importance he assumed all successful people harbored, and when she didn't he felt disbelief, disappointment, and respect. He almost felt as if he were experiencing the excitement of her new life with her. He learned the fantasy that it was still he for whom she felt the deepest affinity, that he was the one she could turn to at her most confused, when she needed to tell the truth about their

Hollywood phaser. He would always be there for her—when she lost her looks, when her pictures flopped, when the tabloids wrote after her.

It was hard to identify the moment that talking to her began to make his life seem like a crushed ball of dumplings in an empty cup, but there was a point in which he sensed her presence become vague and polite when he laid before her even the parent group about the restaurant. Then there was the subtle change in the way she described her experiences with the director and the other actors, instead of immediately stating out her stories like new pups she wanted to share, she now displayed them so he could see but not touch them. There would be a sudden sideways in the way the bald hair-sell angle and pulled her eyebrows, but then she would turn and face him with her confident eyes and he'd stagger inwardly with the memory of her tongue licking his shoulder.

When the film was over and she returned to New York, she became very aware again. Although *Queen of Night* was not due to be released for some months, Nicki was already "off" as Hollywood. She had an agent who fielded film offers and laid piles of scripts at her feet. She sarcastically denounced the noisy clique of New York-based actors who wouldn't countenance talented newcomers and then she went to their parties. She met a famous actor there—"A pig," she said—who had come on to her rudely and arrogantly. It was at the point that Ledy was about to realize that this famous actor had found her, others would see, and that rest of all there would be just. He backed himself at the vice suspicion of his assembly with unprecedented frenzy.

She was easily pleased when he told her about it. "I'd love to see it when you're done," she said. "I'll be it really good" that it was; and he checked it on the tenth page. After a rising three-day drink he started another one. He didn't like this one either, but when he ran it up he didn't get another benefit. With the rising suspicion that he knew what his was doing, he started another drink. He wasn't sure this one was good either, but it was fun, and he surprised himself by saying it to work on it during his nights off instead of conducting his usual drunkenness of tear of lower Manhattan.

Then Nicki did the Rude Thing. He had gotten tickets for them to go to a dance company she loved. On the evening they were to go, a few hours before he was to pick her up, she canceled. "A friend," she said, had phoned at the last minute, she was coming in from L. A. and Nicki had to have dinner with her. He didn't understand until the morning she explained: "She isn't just a friend. She's my girlfriend. I get involved with her during the shoot—she's a social editor—and I haven't met her for weeks."

"You never said anything about her before," he said softly.

"Well, yeah, I know. I was because—I know it's silly—but I thought you might be jealous."

He started smiling. "No, not quite. It's your business

and I'd never be jealous of a girl, anyway. I just don't like being stood up at the last minute. What are I supposed to do with your ticket?"

For several seconds after they said goodbye, he stood with the burning seconds in his head, staring at the dress that looked as if it had been made to hide dramatic breasts. The following week they were in a bar eating salty peanuts, drinking, laughing, and being, usually by headlessly fashionable means. "I'm sorry you had to find out about Lata this way," she said. "I hope you don't hold it against her. It was my fault, really, that I've said I finally said you. I don't know why I held back. I should've known you wouldn't mind."

Gently he drank. He tried to comfort himself with the thought that if she was a lesbian, it could hardly be her fault that she'd changed him, but it didn't work. Nicki began to describe Lata's wild and daring personal style, her strength, her tenderness for him, she really couldn't be a lesbian, he thought. This was yet another amazing affection or else a symptom of her deep desire of men that he alone had overcome. Then Nicki started in on Lata's sexual prowess.

"You're kidding me," he said.

"What?"

"I mean, I'm not one of those idiots who can't picture what two women could do together. I know there's a lot of things I picture lots of slow, big-asses, you know. And there's frigging, there's tons, there's above and out. But still, if you're used to it, I mean—"

"Believe me, there's no problem," said Nicki. "Lata's the most sexually adventurous human being I've ever met. She's incredibly good at everything, especially covering intimacy. She sometimes wears a suit and I wear latex in jeans and—"

"Because me," he said. "I need to see the man's room."

He walked to the john, started by virtue of the formidable dyke looking gutter-bait victim. He tried sitting in a beat-off material, but he was not used.

When he got back to the table her face recoiled slightly.

"Ledy are you here?"

Of course he was.

She began to talk about her anxiety about the reviews. Queen would get. He could tell from the artificial quality of her voice that she knew something was wrong. He felt she was trying to charm him out of being upset with a display of modesty and vulnerability and she made him even madder. He tried to tell himself he had no right to be mad but it didn't help. The professional jealousy he had normally suppressed in the name of friendship rose and poured down with romantic jealousy. While his head nodded agreements and tilted at polite angles, Nicki's conversation moved ahead, making a bright stranger of self-involvement. He remembered her on her knees in his bed, moaning into the sheets. He remembered another girl from the past whose he had broken up with, remembered specifically how long after

their affair had ended, he could make her blush merely by looking intensely into her eyes the way he had when he'd faced her. If he'd looked at Nicki that way, he thought, she wouldn't even smile. It was likely she'd barely remembered facing him at all. He looked at the wine, almost face before him, focusing on one bright, jagged mirror, a black nail set opened before him, spinning, then, maybe, seeing a name. Filled with shadowy forms of pain and depression.

"And so," said Nicki, dreamily ending a story he'd heard before, "there's nothing he won't do to have me in the past. But he'd like to know me, so I know his gonna be real. It's not about the script. It's pretty much up to me at this point."

"That's a little self-aggrandizing, wouldn't you say?"

"She tipped back her head to release a flood of words and then softly faced him. "Thank," she said. "It does happen to be true." There was no false vulnerability in her voice.

"Does he know you're gay?"

"He probably thinks I am. A lot of people do." She piously capped cigarette with one in her glass and then looked directly at him. "That only makes men want you more, actually."

"Nicki," he said, "why didn't you tell me you're gay?"

She lowered her eyes and shrugged. "I don't know. Because I'm not, really. I do like men sometimes and I have the idea I have to absolutely identify myself in one thing or another. It's true I generally prefer women, and then men are usually more casual for me." She looked up quickly, but it looked like with a smile. "She wanted my eyes down again. "It didn't seem necessary to tell you. Don't you?"

For the rest of the weekend evening he wanted only to go home, to sit and drink. But when he got home he found he was too agitated to do that. He paced the King Patrick Room, thinking of every affected old cad, cadence, obscenity that Nicki had ever said. He reflected how his foolish love had blinded him to her offensive personality. He thought of how true it was that the prettiest, most vulgar people always come to the top. He imagined having her assigned making a pop-out on his face.

His eyes fell on his screenplay. He threw it across the room. He stood staring after it for a long moment. Had there been a movie camera trained on his face, it would have recorded an expression of pensive visionary darkness, then slowly speeding from lustre to feature. He sat down before his typewriter, put a piece of paper in the machine, and began to type. He typed until 1:00 in the morning.

He was awakened the following day by the clucking, answering machine, and then by Nicki's voice leaving a long, somewhat message.

He got up, made coffee, and returned to his typewriter.

A few days later she called again, but he was screening his calls. As he listened to her voice he gave the machine a loud, fiery response. As if he'd heard it, she stopped calling, although there were several hang-up calls during the following week. He wasn't concerned in talking to her. He

had developed a much more satisfying relationship with the way Nicki covering across the pages of his new screenplay.

The screenplay had started as an extension of his angry feelings and had become, on the same night, a serious idea. Nicki was a perfect heroine: capricious, actually capricious, not ambitious, charming, subtle. She crept gradually over the heart of readers, men, while giving, quiescent, Nineties sentiments. She was a woman recognizing in a booklet and the dawn her way into the film business by sleeping with the right people. She slept with men who would enhance her profile and then cost them made. She slept with women, isolated stories of their latest-clad scripts to the press for millions view, and then cost them made. She wrote a story about being molested by her uncle as a child and sold it on a national talk show. She was eventually found to be the one of the most clever of a social magazine who had been holding over her head an extraordinary idea and left sent by one of her male writers. That was only the start of her dramatic decline, during which she reported that too late.

Finally the character from little relationship to the real Nicki, except that he used her favorite jokes, mannerisms, and sayings, and quoted verbatim from private conversations they had had together, most notably about Lata and about the pedophile attack. He would not have thought she was recognizable. But when he finished the first draft and showed it to a friend who worked at the restaurant, the guy called him after the first few lines. "She looked up quickly. "Is this Nicki?"

He edited a *Ken and Tell*.

He took it in a shower and took it out a month later. He was shocked at how good it was. He had never written anything that good in his life. It started him to think his first beloved screenplay had sprung from their vulnerability. He tracked a lack in the drive. He started another screenplay but was distracted by persistent daydreams of Nicki playing scenes from *Ken and Tell*, particularly the one where the hero is vigorously sodomized by the nasty magazine editor.

He didn't look at the script again until the first promotional posters for *Queen of Night* appeared. He saw them when he was unwinding hours from work late one night; they were finally glad to the coming tide of a cheap movie's closing scene. Nicki had not been on it but he was in it as well have been. He stood and stared at the poster while the wind blew plastic bags and candy wrappers about his ankles.

The next morning he read *Ken and Tell* and felt a certain psychic prickling. He decided to send it to a film agent whom he'd met eight years before. As he put it in the mail he felt the first traces that she always accompanied him as attempts to accomplish something.

Queen of Night opened. He didn't see it but he religiously read the reviews. They were mostly about the movie but unanimous in their praise for the "incandescent," "natural," and "complex" performance of "newcomer" Nicki Pasternak. He smiled in spite of himself when he read them. He wanted to call and congratulate her. He did [continued on page 117]

The best of the American collections, plus backstage in Milan

On Fashion: Woody Hochswender

Urban Camouflage

URBAN camouflage has long been an intrinsic feature of fashion, especially in men's wear. Consider the steel-gray and granite-drab tones of the typical male business suit, which blends smoothly into the concrete and asphalt canyons of the modern city. This notion of harmonizing with one's urban environment is related to the drive for conformity among the corporate business classes, as epitomized in such 1950s films as

The Man in the Gray Flannel Suit and Hitchcock's *North by Northwest*, in which a wrongly accused executive, everman played by Cary Grant, operates much of the movie escaping a murderer by merging successfully into the gray-suited throngs of great public spaces like the old Pennsylvania Station in New York.

An Alison Lurie wrote in her 1981 book *The Language of Clothes*: "City clothes are men often made in colors that echo the hues of stone, cement, steel, closely shoes, and wet pavements: black, white, navy, and the darker shades of gray. City clothes are also cut and constructed so as to make the

naturally rounded human figure seem more rectangular, help and it is merge into the urban landscape. The disguise is most complete in the case of the male, whose city suit turns him into an assemblage of oblongs accentuated by a solid umbrella and a rectangle, his attitude case."

Lately, however, young urban men have taken to wearing red camouflage patterned clothing, known



Camouflage also fits snugly for the street a few days later often seems like camouflage.

as camouflage. The pose, echoed by the lyrics, is that of the urban terrorist: a lizard-like Guevara with a revolutionary message and forced by the style.

In actuality, these clothes do not make the urban camo-



Running name: Camouflage print with bellows from Anne Klein by Richard Tyler.

monism has stood in contrast to it. They reverse the symbolism and utility of camouflage since to wear foliage mimicking attire in an urban context salutes the original intention of such clothing. The shapes are the opposite of the oblongs and

parallel lines of the business suit. Camouflage, which have become popular again, are also worn with oversized hooded sweaters, the kind with high pockets and drawstring bottoms, have a blow-out shape that stands out in counterpoint to the sharp lines of, say, tailored suit jackets.

The whole effect is of scoundrels, loose balls, and wavy romance. Camouflage gear is an important element of what is known as grunge style. When a look is pulled off especially well, it is called off (derived from *deck*), which is another example of the way urban English turns the negative into a positive.



The phrase "dressed to kill" also part of the grunge look, as here on a head.

The same look has spread outside the rough neighborhoods of cities and now can be seen on men and women in many contexts. As such change eventually do, it has even shown up on the women's fashion runway. Calvin Klein showed a camouflage skirt in his lower-priced C.K. line. In his headlined debut collection for



Surplus attitude: The look popularized in rap, typically implies defiance and a desire for style in the cheap.

the Anne Klein company, designer Richard Tyler showed a series of camouflage-print dresses—for example, in silk chiffon, with puffed sleeves for a cocktail party in the middle of *Doors*. Sure, such styles may be dull (and dumb), but they also demonstrate the extent to which the grunge of the street—not the collections of Paris or Milan—now influences American fashion.

Tracking the Tucked-in Look

AT AN indeterminate moment in the last few seasons, some men began wearing their sweaters tucked into their trousers, usually cinched with a big, thick belt, like Gordon MacRae in *Cannon*. It's a very retro look, with working-class connotations. No one knows where this came from, no one knows where it will lead. It is a rebellious style tie that seems to have paralleled a trend toward unbuttoning one's shirt and a kind of general missing

up and inversion of men's wear traditions. The tucked sweater can be seen both on the street and in formal fashion presentations, where even buttoned sweaters tucked into the trousers (below right). When combined with skinny, high-waisted overcoat pants, it leads to a trimmed-up silhouette. The overcoat sweaters that are now so popular look less bulky this way, and a man can wear suspenders over them. It is another signal that we are in an era of reverse chic. ■



Double jobs: Models with sweaters tucked in at a recent Calvin Klein fashion show.

NATURAL

A man with dark hair is shown in profile, smiling and looking towards the left. He is wearing a white canvas jacket with a collar and two chest pockets. The background is a bright, slightly hazy outdoor setting with some foliage visible on the right.

selection

A man is standing in a field of tall grass and wildflowers. He is wearing a white suit, including a jacket and trousers. He is looking directly at the camera with a neutral expression. The background is a soft-focus field of flowers under a bright sky.

The best of
American design—
pure and simple

Photographs by Diego Uchitel

The crop of the grain in the spring. A suit jacket with a convertible collar gets more mileage—put the top up and it's a Nehru. Naturally, the canvas jacket (opposite) will always be a spring favorite.

Single-breasted suit: Kevin Rose; suit with convertible collar: Joseph Abboud; Nehru: Calvin Klein; jacket: J. Paul; canvas jacket: Ralph Lauren; shoes: Prada

A man with dark hair and a serious expression is looking towards the camera. He is wearing a white Eisenhower-style jacket with a wide collar and large pockets, over a white t-shirt. He is standing in a field of tall, dry grass or reeds. The lighting is dramatic, with strong shadows.

Looking for a new
lightweight coat? The
Eisenhower jacket
returns for another
tour of duty this spring,
while the three-
quarter length
(opposite) is always
full of possibilities.

Same jacket, shirt, and trousers
by Alexander McQueen.



Three-quarter length version (left)
and white Eisenhower trousers
by Donna Karan New York.



Katana-and-Sean collages, including French sweater, rayon head-scarf shirt, and linen trousers by Perry Ellis Collection.

A shirt jacket pulls double duty—dressy but casual—while a pair of matching sweaters (opposite) proves that two knits are better than one.

Single-breasted three-button Sean shirt jacket, rayon-and-Sean shirt, and linen trousers by Tommy Hilf; grey leather belt by Dante Della.



A black and white photograph of a man standing in a wooded area. He is wearing a light-colored trench coat over a collared shirt. He has his hands in his pockets and is looking directly at the camera.

A trench coat doesn't have to go to great lengths to get the job done. And could there be anything more comfortable than wearing pajamalike clothing (opposite) when the sun's out?

Three-quarter-length linen trench coat, shirt: Armani; linen shorts: Armani; hat: Louis Vuitton; shoes: Gucci



Left: Armani; hat: Louis Vuitton; shirt: Armani; shoes: Gucci; shorts: Armani

Single-breasted four-button knee-length
jacket and trousers, cotton hand-woven
shirt, and button sandals by Fendi by Ralph
Lauren. Riding boots by Guccio Gucci by
Ralph Lauren Sportswear.



A three-piece suit looks
casual if it hangs loose,
and an updated version
of the riding jacket
(opposite) can go far
when you're stretching
a wardrobe.

Single-breasted three-button
knee suit, matching vest, and linen-
and-cotton shirt by Akira Kikuchi;
watch by Breitling.



How to Make Love to a Woman

Hands-on advice from a woman who does

By Susie Bright

FOR AS LONG AS I'VE BEEN reading promises in the back of popular magazines, I've been drawn to that captivating title: *How to Pick Up Girls*. I'm sure you recall the ad—in addition to the untappable come-on, it showed an average-looking bachelor carefully caressed by a blonde, a brunette, and a red-head. This little sketch was calculated to lead us all to speculate on what his magnificent secret might be.

When I became old enough to begin picking up girls on my own—we had a single guidebook to assist me—I thought about that cheesy Don Juan and whether I had acquired for free the wisdom his book promised for my age. Sometimes, during particularly blaise nights on the town, I would catch men staring at me and my latest girlfriend; their looks a combination of envy, bewilderment, and confusion. Their eyes seemed to beg for an answer to the question, *How?*

Lebanese and straight men do have a lot in common. We are both hung up on girls. We vie for the same pay. It's only natural for each of us to wonder if the other is having more success at it. Lebanese are certainly outmaneuvered by straight men—in numbers, influence, and earning power. And, of course, you have a penis. But I often think that if I had one, I'd really know what to do with it (and I don't mean cut it off). Lebanese know women from both sides and so we have an internal, almost inextinguishable intimacy with the subject. It goes on a woman that can't be measured.

But it can be shared.

See, for you try to get a girl, you can buy my book, *How to Pick Up Girls Using the Real-Life Dyke Method*, including informative chapters on:

The Look: Because for humans, it all begins with seeing. Look at her. All over. Larger wherever you like. When she returns (and she will if you're really looking), hold her eyes with yours. Hold them close. Every second will feel like a minute. You'll be tempted to avert your gaze, but don't. This is the essence of teasing, the experience that all the verbal reality and phone sex in the world will never replace. It's all in the moment of truth. You'll know then and there whether she wants you or not.

If she doesn't, she'll complain to her friends about how you "objectified" and "degraded" her. But ignore all that crap. Calling a man a secret intelligence is just a trendy way of expressing an old-fashioned sentiment: "He's not my type."

When a dyke gets an unwanted ogling from another dyke, we don't use political reparatives. We just say, "Ooer my dead body."

If she does want you, she'll be charmed by your look, because it says to her that she has full attention. She don't confuse being with watching. Girl-women check out every passing fission, to look, as Whitman's so gracefully defines it, is "to exercise the power of vision." Work it.

The Touch: Lebanese, too, love probing, peering, touching sex organs. We call them hands. And if you have not had the pleasure of taking a woman in your hands—your thumb pinching her breasts, your fingers tracing her nose, your hand caressed up inside her—you are missing some of the finer points of ecstasy. Use your hands like they're your woman's parts. The sweetest confidence I ever made in a man was this: "You are your hands like a dyke."

Lebanese often say that making love to women feels right because "it's like teaching yourself." It's a funny notion for choosing a partner, but a good general means for any lover. Touch her the way you would touch yourself. It's about empathy, not read maps. Every part of her corresponds to a part of yourself. Think about it more time.

The Surrender: Consensual rough stuff aside, the thought that emotionally mature women (meaning no nutcases) enjoy men and enjoy treatment in ways only few women are charitably named on by men who can be trusted—it's like watching a statue cry, very moving. She hopes she'll see more of this, and so she perseveres. Most times the learner that he's vulnerable only three days a year, and it's not worth waiting on the other guy for the high holy days. Personality-wise, you either have that solemn to express or you don't, but usually, anyone can lay back once in a while. Not every girl wants to climb in the saddle and guide the reins, but if you have the slightest inkling that your woman would like to run this back, say a silent prayer and let her do whatever she wants.

My book would offer all that and more. But remember this bit of foul wisdom: Picking up girls is the easiest part of love. When it comes to seduction, men and women have almost everything in common: It's holding on to affection and lust that remains unshakable. Except maybe for this: The beginning of love is the promise of all that's to come—for boys and for girls. And it all begins with a look, which is nothing more than a hope. If I can seduce a straight girl with the strength of my curious green eyes, then you shouldn't have any problem at all. ■



Catwalk Jungle

Backstage at the men's wear shows in Milan

Photographs by Michael Koorits



Showing their stuff: Twice a year, Italy's men's-wear designers parade their fashion collections down the runway in Milan, the notoriously sedate capital of tailored men's clothing. The theatrical hoopla includes pumped-up models, posy photographers, and a last-minute styling frenzy. On these two pages, scenes of the backstage chaos and the finished look at the By-blas show



Spring trends: Men's fashion, like women's, has its seasonal trends—slowly proposed by designers like Gianni Versace (right) that may or may not make their way into millennial closets. For spring, there were three strong influences:

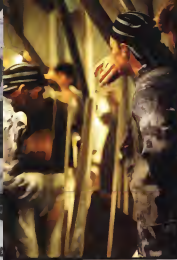
1. Bold shirts and ties, from Giorgio Armani; 2. Caps, like those at Dolce & Gabbana; 3. Underwear as outerwear, at Dolce & Gabbana; 4. White, cream, and neutral, muted colors, like this sweater from Krisia; 5. Ethnic, bohemian or not, including this from Krisia; 6. Rustic, ethnic looks, especially the embroidered jackets at Armani.



Men at work: For the models, all that standing around waiting can be exhausting. A model and a dressmaker relax backstage at Byronic. Inset: Models waiting to go out at Dolce & Gabbana in sleeveless T-shirts and wrap skirts.



Design direction: Gianni Versace, with sister Donatella, supervises his troops before his show. Inset: Fashion wags-in-a-hill around outside the Armani show



Final touches: The designers typically fine-tune the models' looks before they are sent down the runway. Above left, models check themselves out at Krizia and, left, at Dolce & Gabbana.

1. Valentino fluffs up a model
2. Shaved heads at Dolce & Gabbana
3. Hair care at Krizia
4. Stefano Gabbana fixes a look
5. Hair on a runway at Versace
6. Keith Warty, co-designer at Rybka, adjusts a look
7. Ready for the catwalk at Krizia



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F I C T I O N H I M A R T O A I T S K I L L

forward from a girl called once but hung up when she answered. He spent an evening at a bar trying to revive his feelings of angst toward her and realized that he hadn't thought of her with passion for some time. He left and, then began to flirt with the girl behind the bar.

Early one morning, his phone message clocked on. He'd earned the volume down the right before and he was half asleep, so he was only barely aware of a voice leaving quite a long message. He didn't imagine that it was Nicki, he thought he might have met a lover in a job and he got up, then went back to sleep. When he woke and played the tape he was stunned to hear the confident voice of the film again. Kim and Tiff, he said and was wonderful. Could Nicki call him back as soon as possible?

Then he was in the agent's office. If he'd worn a hat he would've rung it as he looked. The agent looked at him as if he respected him. In fact, he looked as if people he respected came and sat in his office every day. Nicki had done well and well. The agent was okay in his chair as if everything were okay.

"I'm not a person who gushes, typically," said the agent. "But I'll tell you honestly I haven't checked with a script like this for a long time. I could hardly see the scenes before my eyes. I could see what the actors looked like. I actually have somebody in mind for the lead. But this thing's fine."

The next few weeks were a puzzle. He couldn't sleep, he couldn't eat. He would tell people about the agent and feel his face in confused expressions of happiness and fright. He called Nicki three times and hung up. He called his parents and the shocked pride in their voices almost made him cry.

The agent was right. He sold the screenplay within weeks to a director. Nicki had heard of since adolescence. Nicki was now the agent's office in sign the contract, and the agent talked to him about going to Los Angeles to meet the director. Nicki nodded dumbly.

"By the way," said the agent, "I remember the actress I mentioned to you who I think is perfect for the lead? I'm having a colleague of mine show her the script. Have you seen Queen of Night?"

He flew to Los Angeles the next day. The trip was a series of disconnected and ill-fated ones of which popped various unrelated leads. An escort of police men flanked his car trips through each

different frame, bright, smiling signs called out to him doors opened to reveal great expanses of rug and mahogany floors, people in uniform, women in brass hats and his friends-smoking men in suits-alcohol, coffee, or smoke. He sat in the sunken bath of his hotel bathroom, drinking Scotch, listening to MTV, and thinking how odd it was to find himself an accessory to all the plots he'd made about the grotesque and vulgarity of Los Angeles. He felt a little hypocritical, but he knew Los Angeles didn't have a lover in a job and a face left and didn't say it in his mind, and then, he thought as he he passionately avoided, then lay on his back in L.A. writing a script called Kim and Tiff about a love and tell that was an honest to God love and tell was only one more looky face appearing in one more frame, the frame of outraged Nicki reading the script, a great punch line underscored by pop music.

He flew back to New York with a terrible headache and a vague sense of shame.

His answering machine greeted him with an angrily flashing light. He had sent messages? They were all long up calls and he listened and paced as he listened to them. Well, maybe the lead's not a yet. He became so absorbed in hanging his must-wrinkled shirt on his very hanged that he jumped when the phone rang. The voice was so true with politeness and expressed expression that he didn't recognize it.

"So you're there," she said. "I'll be over in two minutes."

"Nicki, I—"

Click.

His face impulse was to leave the apartment, but this was too embarrassing. Besides, he wanted to see her face. Not just because of the script but because, he suddenly realized, he'd missed her. He wanted to tell her about L.A. The thing was, the probably didn't want to hear it. She was probably on her way over to punch him. He remembered himself she was only a girl but his hands shook. He decided that when she hung the phone he could make up his mind whether to let her in. He was. He listened. He heard the King Family Room trying to compose herself as an expression of amiable politeness. She knocked. He opened his palm as his pants before he let her in.

Her cold face was very different

from the face he had held in memory. She looked oddly diminished, ordinary, and—for the first time—wary. He didn't notice her smile on him behind, exposing her attitude to her shadow.

"Hi," he said.

She stared at him. She was holding a copy of his script, she dropped it on the floor. "Why," she said, "did you do that?"

"Nicki," he said, "no one will know it's you."

Only everybody in the restaurant. The diner's most visible waiter.

"It isn't you, Nicki. It's an imaginary person. It's a cartoon character with some of your traits."

"A foolish cartoon character who was modeled by her uncle. Couldn't you think up anything by yourself? God, you're the cartoon character."

"You'll have to forgive me, but that sounds a little funny coming from a woman who hangs about wearing lingerie and getting dressed by a stylist."

"You're such a coward and a ripoff. I respected you and—"

"You never respected me. I was a failure for your country."

"Open me the manhood. I don't respect you now." She turned, unsatisfied the door, and walked out.

He followed her, out onto the sidewalk. When she turned the corner, he thought he saw a flicker of smile on her face before it went indignant again.

"Nicki, come on, it's not that bad. I did not rip you off."

"And what was that shit just now about me and Lana? What was that?"

"I was just responding to—"

"Let's be honest for a second. The reason you seem that badly put off is that I wouldn't fuck you. We both know that. You were mad at me because you can't stand my body like a little dog for months and—"

He slapped her hand, slipping her across her shoulder and nose. She staggered and froze in disbelief. She moved closer his heart. The busy tables of daytime Manhattan became a gray backdrop for the brightness of Nicki's face and the disheveled heads of strangers staring to stare or disgust at the voice which struck this small, fragile woman. "Watch it, buddy," said someone. He turned with an impulse to explain himself and then she was on him, punching his face and body, his—

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